

Art. Satie
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disques

JANUARY
1931

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FOR JANUARY 1931

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Vol. I

JANUARY, 1931

No. 11

EVERYTHING is bad. Nothing is good. Sales of records are falling off. Dealers are discontinuing their record departments. Other dealers are bankrupt. Manufacturers are not renewing their contracts with celebrity artists. Dealers have larger stocks of records on hand than ever before. Smaller sales cause less frequent turn-overs. The radio has killed the phonograph. Records and phonographs are out of style. In a year or so there won't be any more records. Not enough album sets are sold to make them profitable. All the good things have been recorded. Nothing but repetitions will be released. Record buyers cannot find dealers who carry complete stocks of classical records. They must place their order and wait. Dealers don't know what records are available. If they happen to know the disc is available they don't know anything about the composition, interpretation or recording. All the good old records have been dropped from the catalogues. Caruso records don't sell anymore. Toscanini will *never* record Beethoven's *Fifth*. Record girls grow more stupid every day. Record prices are too high. There is no profit in records. The sale of cheap records has dropped to practically nothing. Things are in a helluva state.



Now write a good, strong, cheery editorial. Look at the bright side. Every cloud has a silver lining. Things are never so bad as they seem. It is always darkest just before the dawn. Two and two make four. A bird in the hand . . .



Well, let's go! Here are the facts. Radio has cut into record sales. The race and foreign record sales have suffered, due to the general business depression. More celebrity records have been released than the demand warranted. Dealers' stocks have increased out of proportion to their sales. The great variety of fine recordings that have been made available have attracted a large number of musically intelligent record collectors. This new group requires the services of dealers sufficiently well informed to cater to its needs. Many dealers are unable to qualify and are passing more or less quietly out of the picture. Everywhere alert dealers realize that the future of the record business lies with this group and are preparing adequately to serve this clientele. These dealers report ever increasing record sales. Business is good with them. That is "something" these days. More schools than ever are including courses in musical his-

tory and appreciation—record libraries in each of these schools. The importance of music as a cultural subject is being more generally appreciated. More private libraries are being developed. The Gramophone Shop, Inc., New York City, is preparing the most comprehensive catalogue of records, both domestic and imported, ever issued. *Disques* is adding many new subscribers every day.



We predict for 1931: Greater record sales than in 1930. Fewer dealers with more complete stocks and adequately informed salespeople will secure this business. Fewer celebrity records will be issued, and more of each will be sold. Dealers will enjoy greater volume with less stock. Collectors will not suffer, for the vast number of items issued in 1930 will still be available. What collector can truthfully say he has added to his library every worthwhile record that was issued last year? Artists whose contracts expire will be engaged again at a remuneration commensurate with the profits their records have made. Those artists whose records do not sell in sufficient quantities will be dropped. The profits of the one group will not have to be used to dissipate the losses of the other. The manufacturers will enjoy a real profit on their celebrity records and will be in a position further to exploit this class of discs. The collector will certainly benefit from the stability thus afforded. Perhaps by slightly lower prices. Due to the continued improvement in recording more and more music lovers, even the most critical, will be convinced of the value of records for study and enjoyment. More will be written about recorded music. The leading periodicals and metropolitan newspapers are now reviewing records. As is always the case, many others will follow.



We have just re-read the first paragraph of this editorial; but even that does not make us wish to change our prophecy. The finest recordings ever made will be released this year; the finest reproducing instruments ever manufactured are available for playing them; and an appreciable portion of the American public is conscious of the cultural value of music. The record industry is building on solid ground. Nothing can stop it. And so Happy New Year.



FRANCIS D. PERKINS, who contributes an article on Arturo Toscanini to this issue, has been assistant music critic of the New York *Herald Tribune* (New York
(Continued on page 455))

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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CODE

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer and all records are domestic releases unless the word **IMPORTED** appears directly under the number: B-Brunswick, C-Columbia, EB-Edison-Bell, FO-Fonotopia, G-National Gramophonic Society, HO-Homocord, O-Odeon, PA-Parlophon, PD-Polydor, R-Regal (English), and V-Victor.

Arturo Toscanini

FRANCIS D. PERKINS

"Good conductors perform; great conductors interpret; the greatest conductors recreate," wrote Lawrence Gilman in the New York *Herald Tribune* of February 7, 1926, in reference to Arturo Toscanini. These words happily summarize the difference between the genius in this field and the well routined leader of average ability, and define the essential feature of what is accomplished in a performance under this noted Italian conductor.

The increasing importance of the conductor during the past few decades, commented upon in the December issue of *Disques*, has been accompanied by some unadmirable developments. Along with reasoned admiration on the part of discerning music lovers for a great conductor's artistic achievements, there has also been a cult, sometimes waxing hysterical, by less discriminating admirers, such as those who thronged to the dock some years ago to bid a famous leader an osculatory farewell. Laudatory comment has had its "lunatic fringe," and this has led conservative commentators to decry the "virtuoso conductor" and to call for that musical will o' the wisp, the competent, unsensational director who will "let the music speak for itself" without the imputed error of obtruding his own personality into the performance.

It is easy to understand how a reaction from gushing praise, a desire to emphasize the undeniable importance of the orchestra itself, apart from that of the conductor, leads to this point of view. But, although it is old enough to have become a tradition, it is based on a fallacy; for, except for those fortunate individuals who can recreate music for their mental ears simply by reading a score, music cannot speak for itself, except through interpreters—singers, instrumentalists, and conductors—and the clarity and vividness of its speech depend upon the interpreter's ability and recreative powers.

In the case of an orchestra, there is need of some unifying and inspiring influence, both to assure unity in the technical details of the performance and a community of spirit in its more intangible features. Whether group direction and spirit can accomplish this unaided has not yet been proved, at least on this side of Russia. Of results of uncondacted orchestral playing in that country we cannot speak, owing to lack of knowledge; those here have so far shown only that a competent orchestra can do better without a conductor, after sufficient rehearsal, than with an incompetent one. But it is doubtful whether group leadership and inspiration can, day in and day out, do more than strike a commendable general average in interpretation.

But this, or what we get under the direction of a merely "competent" or "adequate" conductor, is not the recreation of the music obtained under the leadership of a Toscanini. Under the able routineer, orchestral music can speak for itself only in part, with muffled voice; for complete, vivid and unobscured speech, it requires the unifying will, the insight and artistic intentness of one of the small group of leaders who can be placed in the third and highest of the categories outlined by Mr. Gilman. The consensus of musical opinion has, with few dissenting voices, ranked Mr. Toscanini among the foremost members of that group.

Arturo Toscanini, son of Claudio and Paola Montani Toscanini, was born in Parma on March 25, 1867. In 1876, he was registered as a non-resident student in the Parma Conservatory, and attended Prof. Griffini's classes in solfeggio. In 1878, he became a resident student, studying the 'cello with Prof. Carini and counterpoint and composition with Giusto Dacci. As a student 'cellist, he went with the Parma orchestra to play at the Turin exposition in 1884, and at about this time had published his only compositions on record, a Berceuse for piano and several songs.

Toscanini was graduated from the conservatory in 1885 with perfect marks in the departments of 'cello and composition, for which he was awarded "lode distinta." He had not yet, however, attained prominence beyond the conservatory, where his unusual memory had already caused comment; it is said that when Dacci doubted what he heard about Toscanini's memorizing powers, the youth convinced him by writing out from memory the prelude to *Lohengrin*. While a student, Toscanini had also done his first conducting, leading the conservatory orchestra in his class compositions.

Soon after graduating, Toscanini went to South America to play the 'cello in the mainly Italian orchestra of an opera company in Brazil. According to Tobia Nicotra's biographical eulogy of Toscanini, the company's conductor, a Brazilian musician named Leopoldo de Miguez, was at odds with the orchestra, and, when the company went from Sao Paulo to Rio de Janeiro, resigned just before the scheduled opening of the Rio season with *Aida*. The impresario persuaded the concertmaster, Superti, to conduct *Aida* instead of Miguez. But the audience, not relishing the presence of a substitute as leader, had booed Superti out of the pit before he could get beyond the opening measures. Superti urged the chorusmaster, Aristide Venturi, to try his luck with the baton, but Venturi had only taken a step into the pit before the booing decided him to make a hasty retreat.

The musicians, according to Nicotra's narrative, then took matters into their own hands. Toscanini was propelled to the rostrum; someone enveloped him in a borrowed dress coat; a baton was thrust into his hand. He closed the score, and began the opera anew. Thanks to curiosity, the audience had quieted; it was soon aroused to fervent enthusiasm. The result was that Toscanini prepared and conducted eighteen operas during the Rio season.

He returned to Italy to find that this incident had made him well known; from then on, his principal work was as a conductor, although, at his own request, he played a 'cello in the orchestra for the Milan premiere of Verdi's *Otello* in 1887.

In November, 1886, he began his championship of the music of Alfredo Catalani by producing *Edmea*, which had failed under another leader, at the Carignano Theater in Turin, with pronounced success. On May 21, 1892, at the Dal Verme Theater in Milan, Toscanini started Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* on its successful career. The following October, Alberto Franchetti's *Cristoforo Colombo* was to be produced at the Carlo Felice Theater in Genoa as part of the observance of the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America. Luigi Mancinelli, scheduled to conduct, fell ill at the last moment. Toscanini, telegraphed for, asked for one day for consideration, during which he obtained the score, and studied it throughout the night. The next morning he wired his acceptance and set out for Genoa to conduct the work that night. Later, he took *Cristoforo Colombo* on a tour.

Meanwhile, Toscanini continued to conduct in Turin, where, at the Teatro Regio, he directed the first performances of two well known operas by Puccini,

Manon Lescaut in 1893 and *La Bohème* in 1896.

In 1896, he was called to La Scala in Milan to conduct the orchestral concerts in succession to Martucci. In the following year, he was married to Carlotta de Martini. La Scala was closed for a year, then reorganized and reopened with Giulio Gatti-Casazza as general manager and Toscanini as musical director. He held this post (except, according to Nicotra, in 1904 and 1905) until his departure for New York in 1908, while continuing to conduct operas and concerts in other Italian cities.

Coming to the Metropolitan Opera Company at the beginning of Mr. Gatti-Casazza's regime, Toscanini made his New York début in *Aïda* on the opening night of the season, November 16, 1908. Of his interpretation, the late H. E. Krehbiel wrote in the New York *Tribune* of the following day: "He is a boon to Italian opera as great and as welcome as anything that has come out of Italy since Verdi laid down his pen. In the best sense he is an artist, an interpreter, a re-creator. Without such men music is as lifeless to the ear as it is on the printed page."

Among notable works introduced or revived at the Metropolitan under Mr. Toscanini's direction were Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* on December 23, 1909; Gluck's *Armida* on November 14, 1910; Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West*, which had its much heralded world premiere on December 10, 1910; Moussorgsky's *Boris Godunoff* on March 19, 1913, Montemezzi's *L'Amore dei Tre Re* on January 14, 1914, and Weber's *Euryanthe* on December 19, 1914. As a symphony conductor, he won American acclaim with his performances of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* at the Metropolitan in the spring of 1913.

Owing to a nervous breakdown, Toscanini had to return to Europe before the close of the opera season in 1915, and it became rumored that he would not return to the Metropolitan. These reports, at first denied, were confirmed in September; Giorgio Polacco took his place. Italy's entrance into the war, and Toscanini's desire to be near his son, who had volunteered as a soldier, were the principal reported reasons at the time for his determination not to come back, but a friend of his has mentioned dissatisfaction with artistic conditions at the Metropolitan as an important factor in his decision. The Metropolitan tried hard to induce him to return, but without success.

His American admirers had to content themselves, for the time being, with reading of his distinguished patriotic services, his conducting music for the soldiers as near as possible to the front, even under fire; of how he conducted almost on the firing line at the taking of Monte Santo. During the war period, he conducted operas and concerts in various parts of Italy.

In 1920, he assembled an orchestra from the best available players, which, after an Italian tour, sailed for the United States in November to make a tour sponsored by the Italian government and a group of prominent Americans. Under the title of the Scala Orchestra, Mr. Toscanini's organization gave its first concert in New York at the Metropolitan Opera House on December 28, and gave opportunity for renewed admiration of the conductor's powers. The tour, while not financially profitable, was an artistic success; the orchestra gave many more concerts than had been originally planned before departing in April.

On returning to Italy, Toscanini was made artistic director of La Scala which, closed during the war and early post-war periods, was reopened on December 27, 1921, with Verdi's *Falstaff*. He held this position for eight years, during which

two world premieres attracted unusually widespread attention, those of Boito's *Nerone* on May 1, 1924, and Puccini's *Turandot* on April 1, 1926.

In November, 1924, Clarence H. Mackay, chairman of the board of directors of the Philharmonic Society of New York, announced that Toscanini had agreed to conduct the Philharmonic in a series of concerts during the following season. Returning here after four years' absence, Toscanini made his first appearance with the Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall on January 14. He conducted fifteen concerts, including one in Brooklyn and one in Philadelphia, before sailing for Italy on February 10. Meanwhile he had agreed to return in 1927 for a similar number of Philharmonic concerts.

His first 1927 appearance was scheduled for January 13, but Toscanini fell ill on arriving in New York, and two weeks passed, while it began to be feared that he would have to return to Italy without conducting at all. One report had it that he was entirely worn out, and would have to take a year's rest. But he recovered in time to conduct four concerts early in February, and these showed that his illness had in no way affected his conductorial powers. He resumed his work at La Scala in March, and in April the Philharmonic announced that he had become a regular conductor, and would give over thirty concerts the following season.

Toscanini's 1928 season with the Philharmonic lasted from late in January until the beginning of April. As chief conductor of the merged Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, he was scheduled to return to New York in mid-January of 1929 for a term of eleven weeks, but, owing to the demands of his work at La Scala, was in America for only half that time, returning to Italy in April to take the Scala company to Vienna and Berlin. Except for a Swiss tour with the Scala orchestra in 1924 this tour marked Toscanini's first appearances in Europe outside of Italy, if available records are correct.

This fervently acclaimed tour closed Toscanini's work at La Scala; he had decided to devote himself to symphonic conducting and to make the conductorship of the Philharmonic-Symphony the principal feature of his artistic activities. He returned to New York for the first eight and the last eight weeks of the season of 1929-'30, and, in April, took the Philharmonic-Symphony on its first European tour, which included concerts in fifteen cities in France, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Belgium and England. In July, he made his first appearance in the Wagner festival at Bayreuth, conducting *Tannhäuser* and *Tristan und Isolde*, and he will again conduct at Bayreuth next Summer. He is now back in America for his sixth consecutive season as an orchestral leader.

Many regard Toscanini as one of the most prominent examples of the "virtuoso conductor," of the type which is sometimes believed to receive excessive attention. But this label suggests a musician who, besides possessing a striking and influential personality, consciously keeps himself in the foreground, who gives "personal" readings in which the spirit of the music and the composer's intentions may be sacrificed for effectiveness.

Toscanini has, indeed, a striking personality, but it would be hard to find a musician who is more objective in his art, more sincere and devoid of pose, more governed by the ardent desire to give the best possible performance of the music before him. Of course, one may disagree with him on certain points of interpretation or detail, but without denying the sincere, objective conviction which seems to mark all his artistic activities. Off the conductorial podium, Toscanini keeps himself in the background as far as possible, shunning publicity, avoiding inter-

views, and preferring a quiet life with his wife, his son, Walter, and his daughters, Wanda and Wally.

Toscanini's phenomenal memory and his near-sightedness have been often commented upon, also his occasional outbursts—how, for instance, in a performance of *Un Ballo in Maschera* at La Scala, he resisted the public demand for an encore by the tenor, Zenatello, and, when it kept up, left the stage, went home, and started for South America the next day; how, in a symphony concert in Italy, he struck his baton against the bow of an offending violinist, who sought consolation in the courts. But these occasional tantrums should not be misunderstood; they are caused not by a thwarted ego, but by thwarting of his desire for artistic perfection—not by an offense against the man, but by an offense against the music.

Both in the operatic and the concert fields, Toscanini's taste is catholic, while not all-embracing. In Italy, he has long been a major Wagnerian prophet, and, at Bayreuth, the Germans have acclaimed the Wagnerian interpretations of the first Latin conductor to take part in these festivals. By New York opera goers, he is remembered for his conducting of works of Wagner, Weber, Moussorgsky and Gluck, for instance, as well as for his devotion to the work of his compatriots.

In his programs with the Philharmonic and Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestras, the standard German classic and romantic works, including those of Richard Strauss, and Italian numbers figure prominently, but Toscanini has not neglected French music—he is a notable interpreter of Debussy, and, among the modernists, has given representation to Honegger. Elgar, Kodály, Smetana, Falla, Borodin and Moussorgsky are names on his lists that can point to international variety. Tchaikowsky is conspicuously absent—Toscanini is reported to have a pronounced dislike for the music of Peter Ilytch, although Nicotra records that he gave the Pathetic Symphony in Italy in 1893.

Among contemporary composers, Toscanini usually inclines towards the conservatives, giving us Respighi, but not Malipiero; Wetzler, but not Hindemith; Kodály, but not Bartók—on the other hand, he has given us Honegger's *Pacific 231*. His program making, outside of the standard repertoire, has come in for some criticism, for a devotion to various contemporary Italian works which are not considered worthy of his genius, and which occupy time and room that could be better devoted to more rewarding music. It is also objected that, except for one work by Ernest Schelling, he has not given any American music here or elsewhere. But, as this is only the second full season which he has devoted primarily to the Philharmonic, it can be attributed to lack of acquaintance with American scores rather than to any prejudice against them as such; we may hope to hear, in the course of time, some of the more notable specimens of music composed in this country, such as Loeffler's *A Pagan Poem* or Griffes's *Kubla Khan*, under his direction.

The familiar features of Toscanini's orchestral interpretations have been dwelt on before—clarity of detail and outline, vividness and subtle variety of color, elasticity of tempo, intent eloquence and fidelity to the composer's intentions as he sees them, for instance—in short, the recreation of the music.

His work has not lacked recognition, and, internationally noted as one of the world's greatest conductors, Toscanini could have ample reason to congratulate himself as a successful musician, to find happiness and satisfaction in his laurels. But, in all probability, he never will; he must always strive for perfection, aim at the unattainable—and in this striving we have at least a partial explanation of his recreative genius.

A Few Words About Erik Satie

RICHARD GILBERT



Erik Satie was a great humorist. In fact, he was the greatest musical ironist of all time. There is nothing in the old music to compare with his acrimonious wit or his rambling and incoherent facetiousness. And if we now cast our eyes about for his kind among living composers, we become disappointed after discovering only a Lord Berners; an aping eclectic who, having worshipped his gods of technical advancement in the forms of a Strawinsky, a Falla, a Debussy and a Schönberg (as heterogeneous an array of composers as could well be imagined), leans heavily on the ironic methods of none other than the harlequinesque subject of this sketch. It must be stated simply right in the beginning that there are no comparisons with Erik Satie.

Such musical buffoonery as Satie displayed towards the end of his career has no parallel in the history of Euterpe's chosen art. But not all of Satie's expressions were given to comic drollery. This odd and eccentric composer was capable of classic creation bordering on the sedate and mysterious and bequeathed, somewhat curiously, with the archaic. He was capable, also, of falling into the commonplace banalities of the cafe-concert and the music hall. A strange creature was Satie. A link between the old and the new, a bridge over which other musicians of riper gifts passed, this musical buffoon never created for himself the deep niche in the history of his art that his early harmonic innovations must have promised. Having assisted at the birth of Impressionism, he later abnegated the success of Debussy and Ravel and espoused the cause of the younger musicians who were forming a group of revolutionists called "Les Six," and proclaiming their enfranchisement from the "yoke of Debussyism." Satie's career is too varied a one to be dealt with satisfactorily in a short sketch. A few gramophone recordings of his peculiar works have been published. A compendious biographical sketch of his life and several perfunctory remarks on the works recorded must suffice as an introduction to this exceptional adventurer in the realm of music.

Eric Alfred Leslie Satie, known to the musical world as Erik Satie, was born at Honfleur, May 17, 1866. His mother was of Scotch descent. Honfleur is on the coast of France and has been pointed out by Jean-Aubry, one of the earliest appreciators of Satie, as once the "home of mariners whose hunger for the unknown led them, of set purpose, to seek suspected Arcadias or mysterious Africas. The music of Erik Satie was, perspicacious, imperturbable and bantering, the equivalent of his contempt for beaten paths and safe, familiar vistas." Early in life Satie developed, it is said, a great fondness for the liturgic chant and would listen to it with delight for hours at a time. Later he studied with scant success at the Paris Conservatoire.

His first compositions appeared about 1887-90 and showed that Satie, either by direct inspiration, or through imitation, began to ignore the modern scale system. It is significant, for example, that he wrote music in the whole-tone scale before Debussy ever thought of doing so. The three *Sarabandes*, the three *Gymnopédies*, and the three *Gnossiennes*, all for piano, show the setting of harmonic precedence.

Slow and solemn successions of seventh and ninth chords, indefinitely linked, occasionally yielding place to a processional of majestically perfect chords, exercise a relentless disposition towards the rules of harmony known at that time. There is little trace, in these works, of a plan of construction. There seems to be no reason why the chord progressions might not continue for hours. His obsession with plain-song, and his acute sensitivity to new or revived sonorities, together with his love for antique and slow dance-forms, indeed made possible the beginning of a typically French color development in music. Erik Satie was inaugurating the musical methods towards which Claude Debussy was tending at the same time, and to which he was to give a highly individual stamp.

Debussy made the acquaintance of Satie in a Montmartre cafe about 1890. It seems that at the Conservatoire Satie's circumspect indolence had led to his being demoted from a piano class. For awhile he was a pupil with Chevillard, Paul Dukas and Philipp (quite illustrious company) in the piano class taught by Mathais. This professor advised him to go and study the violin, which was more likely to be of use to him. He then attended a composition class as a listener, but gave constant preference to the more liberal teachings of mediæval religious polyphony. He wandered about, occasionally playing the piano in cafes, and for awhile seemed to have given up serious study altogether, contenting himself with improvising the most emancipated sonorous combinations and travelling, always, away from tonality. One night, at the Auberge du Clou, Avenue Trudaine, where he played the piano, Satie became intimate with a Prix de Rome winner who, not quite in keeping with his official success, was enamoured with the new sonorities contained in the *Sarabandes*, the *Gymnopédies* and the *Gnossiennes*. This young composer was then known as Claude Achille Debussy and had already occasioned some reproach from the pedants with his strangely new *The Blessed Damozel* and *Cinq Poèmes*.

This acquaintance contributed in some measure to the esthetics of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, the *Dances*, and a few of the early Debussy piano pieces. M. G. Jean-Aubry claims, not without reason, that this fact alone would entitle Erik Satie to notice for the part he has played.

Debussy returned the debt, partly, by later making propaganda for the innovator, and orchestrating two of his *Gymnopédies*, thus making them available in the form in which one is now so excellently recorded by the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Serge Koussevitzky. The grave beauty and genuine romantic mysticism of this *Gymnopédie No. 1* should enthral today even those unfamiliar with Satie's music. As I have written in a previous review, there is in the piece a certain lovely cathedral atmosphere attained by the slow and solemn procession of richly built chords. These early works occupy a place in French music directly between César Franck and the Pre-Raphaelite period of Debussy. Written when Satie was twenty-three, they contain nothing of the irony and whimsical humor which so pervaded his later compositions.

Satie divided his time, about 1891, between the writing of music hall bits—the popular French waltz *Je te veux* (C-D15005) is an example—and the fascination of a new mystical order which prevailed at the time, composing for this English Pre-Raphaelite importation, *Sonneries de la Rose Croix* and the *Prélude du Fils des étoiles*. These works, together with the *Prélude de la Porte heroique de Ciel*, composed in 1894, constituted, in Satie's development, the second manner in which the sentiment of mystic purity is substituted, for the more essentially rhythmical direction of his earlier works.

Then Satie's pent up humor began to assert itself. Reprimanded for writing without enough attention to form, Satie immediately composed piano pieces "in the form of a pear" (*Morceaux en Forme de Poire*, 1903). He makes himself still more incomprehensible by entering, when over forty years of age, the *Schola Cantorum*, where he studies counterpoint and fugue with Albert Roussel, and emerges with two scholastic sets of pieces, *Aperçus désagréables* (*Pastorale*, *Chorale* and *Fugue*), and *En habit de cheval* (*Chorale*, *Litanic Fugue*, another *Chorale*, and *Paper Fugue*), self-imposed tasks. Jean-Aubry tells us, "respectfully written to prove to himself and to others that it is possible to write tedious works and yet write them with a sense of humor."

After 1912 the composer of the *Gymnopédies* suddenly produced with much abundance piano pieces of the most unusual sort. Bar lines are dropped, all sorts of nonsensical directions to the performer are incorporated into the score; silly and indefinable programs of no possible connection with the accompanying music find their way on the printed sheet. Yet in all this there is a distinctive glow of genius; Satie does not cease to be musical. Exigencies of space will not permit sufficient comment on these appendages. The reader, if he is able, should procure from his closest music library any of the following for examination: *Heures séculaires et instantanées*; *Vieux séquins et vieilles cuirasses*; *Trois valse du précieux dégoûté*; *Menus propos enfantins*.

Satie's last period saw the composition, among other things, of a short three movement work for orchestra, published in 1921, called *Trois petites pièce montées*, which literally translated might mean "Three Little Exalted Pieces." One never knows Satie's real intentions. The first section, *De l'enfance de Pantagruel* (*Réverie*), is slightly impressionistic and quiet; the second, *Marche de Cocagne* (*Démarche*), points more directly at Rabelais; the last, *Jeux de Gargantua* (*Coin de Polka*), is snickering and blubbing as only that grotesque off-spring of Grangousier could be. The work is scored for a small orchestra: the strings are predominant in the initial movement; a fanfare of trumpets ushers in the second; the third contains comic bits of instrumentation; a rattle is included. The pieces are recorded completely, with faithful reproduction of the original sonority, on the French Columbia record C-D11016, and a miniature score is available, published by La Sirène Musicale, Paris.

In 1916 Satie wrote *Trois Mélodies*, which are recorded on French Columbia disc C-D15195. Madame Jane Bathori, to whom the second piece, *La Statue de Bronze*, is dedicated, sings them superbly, accompanied by Darius Milhaud at the piano. The three *chansons* aptly display Satie's trenchant wit. *La Statue de Bronze* deals with the metal frog of the Parisian barrel-game. Counters are thrown into holes cut into the top of a barrel-like stand. In the scoring, the highest number of points are secured by tossing the counters into an aperture surmounted by a bronze frog. The counter passes through the frog, who rewards with a croak, and comes out in a receptacle below. The poem is by Leon-Paul Fargue. Here is a literal translation: "The frog of the barrel-game becomes weary and bored in the evenings under the arbor—She is sick of being a statue who is going to pronounce a great word, the Word . . . She would rather be with the others who make bubbles of music with the moon's soap, on the edge of the public washing place, painted a golden brown, which one sees shining down yonder between the branches. During the day one throws to her heart a feeding of counters which pass through her without doing her any good—and which disappear to go and ring in the numbered cabinets of her pedestal. And in the evening insects sleep in her mouth." The first *Mélodie* on the record *Daphnéo* is dedicated to Emile Engel and is claimed by the

author of the music to be by M. God. Is this a mortal or another of Satie's witticisms? It is quite funny, although a translation, literal or poetic, it is of no avail, as the point is centered entirely on a play of words. The musical accompaniment is highly amusing. *La Chapelier* is dedicated to Igor Strawinsky and is a poem of René Chalupe, the author of *Les Soirées de Petrograde*, put to music by Milhaud and also recorded by Bathori, with the composer accompanying. "The Hat Merchant is astonished to observe that his watch is three days slow, even though he took care always to grease it with ointment of the best quality. But he let crumbs of bread fall in the wheels. And in vain he has dipped it in his tea . . . That will not make it go any faster." The music is highly appropriate.

Satie died in 1925. In his own country as well as in England, Germany, or America, he was until recently known, among a few inquiring musicians and amateurs only, as the man who called his music by funny names and who further added ludicrous directions to the amazed performer of his brief, barless and, for the most part, entirely signatureless piano pieces. Occasionally one comes across a reproduction of the quick drawing, biting in its simplicity, of Satie by Pablo Picasso. Dishevelled in appearance, bearded and bespectacled, the master clown of music, one may be assured, has been paid the dubious compliment of accurate portraiture by the greatest of modern draughtsmen. Truly, Satie was the founder of (if a label is necessary) the modern French Impressionistic school. Yet, for a long while, he was only given credit for the composition of a few music hall pieces. Ravel and Debussy, before the latter's untimely death, let it be known what they owed to him. Jean Cocteau (in *Le Coq et l'Arlequin*) has published the principles of his esthetics. That Satie furnished one of the necessary links between the music of the past and the music of the present only a reactionary critic would attempt to deny. His music has a decided charm of its own which may not penetrate into your consciousness at once but, in the end, quite takes possession of you.

Je veux faire une pièce pour chiens et j'ai
mon décor: *Le rideau se lève sur un os.*

ERIK SATIE.

THE RECORDS

Gymnopedie No. 1. (Orchestrated by Debussy.) One side and *Bolero*. Third part. (Ravel.) One side. Both played by Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. One 12-inch disc (V-7252). \$2.

Je te veux. Played by Jean Wiener (Piano). One side and *Les Hirondelles—Valse.* (Strauss.) One side. Played by Jean Wiener and Clement Doucet (Two pianos). One 12-inch disc (C-D15005). \$2.

Trois petites pièces montées. One side and *Scenes Alsaciennes.* (Massenet.) One side. Both played by Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Chagnon. One 12-inch disc (C-D11016). \$2.

Trois Mélodies. One side and *Trois Poèmes de Jean Cocteau.* (Milhaud.) Sung by Jane Bathori (Mezzo-Soprano) with piano accompaniment by Darius Milhaud. One 12-inch disc (C-D15195). \$2.

Three Sonatas and a Trio

JOSEPH COTTLER

*Bach's Sonatas for Solo Violin**

It is an obvious aim in all work to try for the greatest effect with the smallest means. That is simply the principle of least action—and most thought—and the science of counterpoint is based on it. For his six sonatas for solo violin the problem specified itself to Bach in this way: "How can I apply the rules of part writing to a single, stringed instrument and so build a one-part invention, a polyphony in one voice?" What must have appealed to him was the trial of making the melody its own counterpoint; of extending theme and figuration in one sinuous line so that background merged with motive, and space, so to speak, became time. How else account for a single voice weaving imitations, canons, inversions, sequences and all the stock in trade by which a contrapuntist manages his theme?

All of which leads to this point: Reflective and intellectual, Bach is called. But those are only the accents of his time. His counterpoint, of course, is a kind of intellectual hatchery, but the incubator must not be confused with brooding. So Bach, the product of his age, wears spectacles, takes snuff, and writes fugues. Bach, the individual, however, is an arrant romantic and dreamer. The six sonatas for solo violin are evidence of that.

They are written in two groups of three, the odd-numbered in four movements formally styled *Adagio*, *Presto*, and the like; the even-numbered, a suite of dances. The essential difference, however, is the grand fugue in each of the former type. The *Fourth* and *Fifth Sonatas*, here presented, are then representative of each group. Another contrast: the *Fourth* is the most lyrical of the set, the *Fifth* the least.

The quiet melody of an *Allemande* opens the *Fourth*, followed by a firm *Courante*, a wistful *Sarabande*, a crisp *Gigue*, and then the famous *Chaconne*—the epic of the violin. In form the *Chaconne* is a setting of some thirty variations on a theme. I know nothing of Bach to compare with the magnitude, the emotional sweep of the *Chaconne* except the Mass in B. It transforms the violin, not alone to an organ, but to something more universal and it is good not to have to see the earthy fiddle, to keep the mystery intact, and listen to Bach as he tells how he saw the Infinite in a chant that grows and dies and grows again and fills worlds. Now you hear it from below heaving skies, now above a seething abyss. It speaks of the pleading of the Paraclete and the redemption of man. The triumphant tumult fades away and more than ever the chant possesses all, the beginning and the end, and every one is part of it. The *Chaconne* is Christian mythology made rare with metaphysical abstraction.

The *Fourth Sonata* must not overshadow the *Fifth* which has a most unique first movement, a characteristic spirited fugue and is a beautiful example of the craft of Bach. Musical motives cannot be simpler than the one in the first movement of this *Sonata*. It consists of two notes which Bach sets rolling. Bit by bit they gather sound, an insistent forming mass. Presently they unwind and give up their rich sonority only to start the process of accretion over again in a new direction.

**Sonata No. 4 in D Minor*. (Bach.) Six sides. Played by Adolf Busch (Violin). Three 12-inch discs (V-DB1422 to V-DB1424). \$2.50 each.

Sonata No. 5 in C Major. (Bach.) Six sides. Played by Yehudi Menuhin (Violin). Three 12-inch discs (V-DB1368 to V-DB1370). \$2.50 each.

Violinists whose Bible, food and drink the Bach sonatas are will quarrel with Adolf Busch's interpretation of the *Fourth* and Master Jehudah Menuhin's *Fifth*. They would quarrel with these even if they never heard them, and reject them doubtless as they in turn reject my Auer edition. Having heard them indeed, the fiddler will find fault with Busch's curdled tones in the *Gigue*, his rough bowing, his temper; Master Menuhin's lack of robustness in tone, and the spelling of his name. He will quarrel because it is in the nature of violinists to quarrel, and because divine light cometh to each according to his state of grace.

For me it is enough that neither executant tampers with the score. I am, in fact, impressed with Busch's honesty and spirit. He is not afraid to be rough. And although young Menuhin labors in parts of the fugue, that virtuoso is lucky who does not collapse right there. For the rest, Bach is fool proof. His phrases are so pregnant that look how you will at them, if you look at all, a significance will make itself felt.

*The Two Aspects of Beethoven**

The order of composition is: *Fifth Symphony*, *Sixth (Pastoral) Symphony*, *'Cello Sonata*, *Trio*. The analogies in mood are: extremes, intermediates. There are those, just now in the minority, who believe that the real Beethoven is he of yellow-hammers, cuckoos and charity, the *Pastoral Symphony* and this *Sonata* for 'cello and piano. The more conventional view is that such a one is the occasional, naïve Ludwig. The really real Beethoven is ingrown, unbalanced and motivated, he of the *Fifth Symphony* and this *Trio*. The difference seems to be the usual trouble of too much surface to reality or elephants. The realest thing, in any case, is what you want. Please God you can afford to choose.

If you choose the *Sonata* you will have a unit of the more pleasant and less fashionable genius. It is brief, as wholly lyric moods are, since they deal in little or no development, but the enchanting *cantabile* in its suggestion and elusiveness carries far. And here is a fundamental problem in the psychology of esthetics which I generously offer to anyone interested: Why cannot lyric passages alone, tunes and the like, bear much repetition? Is it because they are so simple that the attention, having grasped them quickly, ceases to be stimulated? If that is true, then that artist is most successful who provides something incomprehensible, provides it by mechanical effort if his mind is too well-ordered to feel any sense of vagueness. The stimulus to satisfaction—the sting of life, the striving toward God, the veil of beauty, the hidden mystery of things—are they more than breaks in rhythm, gaps in logic, something in experience wilfully hidden, imperfect and therefore evocative?

The *Sonata* is so lyric, with enough hidden away in it to keep it fresh. How much of that quality is due to the performance I cannot say. To be cautious, I own I have never heard better ensemble, better 'cello playing. But Casals has always been an amazing phenomenon.

**Sonata in A Major*, Op. 69. (Beethoven.) Five sides and *Minuet in G*. (Beethoven.) One side. Both played by Pablo Casals (Violoncello) and Otto Schulhof (Piano). Three 12-inch discs (V-DB1417 to V-DB1419). \$2.50 each.

Trio in D Major, Op. 70, No. 1. (Beethoven.) Played by Franz Joseph Hirt (Piano), Alphons Brun (Violoncello) and Lorenz Lehr (Violin). Seven sides and *Der Lindenbaum*. (Schubert-Liszt.) One side. Played by Raoul von Koczalski (Piano). Four 12-inch discs (PD-95346 to PD-95349). \$1.50 each. *Miniature Score: Eulenburg No. 82*.

Item: An arrangement for the same two performers of the *Minuet in G* is thrown in on the sixth side.

The *Trio* is the other Beethoven—less inclined to be lyrical, more violent, painfully poring over his material. In vain do the themes struggle to come out clear and round. Instead, they are curtailed to give way to an elaboration of spirit. The slow second movement is a brooding in anguish. For a sudden and spectacular instant it does break out in immoderate speed, but only to exhaust itself. Even the last movement which has a merry enough theme, *presto*, cannot develop fluently and simply, but must proceed irregularly and by spasms. It does brighten up—after a climax of beautiful dissonances—and bursts into a final dance measure, a release of tension, though not without echoes of its original distress. The *Trio* is the dramatic Beethoven going the way to his last period as we know it in the *Mass in D*.

Item: The highly colored and stormy "Lindentree" (Schubert-Liszt) is well displayed on the eighth side.

Strawinsky's *Capriccio**

LAURENCE POWELL

Without question this is the most important Strawinsky release for some considerable time because it will at last introduce phonograph fans to Strawinsky's newer idiom. The *Piano Sonata* and *Concerto* (1924) were fizzles among his conscious attempts at stylized music; they might have been written by a Professor of Counterpoint well in his cups. The *Capriccio*, however, decidedly "comes off," but why Strawinsky ever decided to lay down all those tools with which he fashioned his works up to the masterpiece *Le Sacre* (1911) must remain something of a mystery. It was as though he had reached, in *Le Sacre*, a mountain pass beyond which could be discerned pastures utterly new, but instead of hurrying on to enjoy their promise he turned his back on them and gradually strolled so far in the opposite direction that, before long, he actually found himself shaking hands with the past in the person of Bach. He even had a drink with Handel and hobnobbed with Gluck. I had not heard a note of *Apollon Musagete*, and so when Koussevitzky's recording of something from that work appeared I went into a music store and asked to hear it. After a few turns of the disc, I quietly told the damsel waiting on me that Victor had got horribly mixed up in its labels, and had stuck the Strawinsky label on a Handel or Gluck excerpt. A wise bird was brought to me, and I was assured that all was right. The creator of *Le Sacre* could be mistaken for Handel at his weakest!

The *Capriccio*, composed in 1929, though stylized music, is, however, easily recognizable as Strawinsky, swaggering along, showing off all sorts of styles and echoes of the past, but at the same time having the credentials of originality. It is in substance a piano concerto with the solo instrument well embedded in the general

* *Capriccio pour Piano et Orchestre*. Six sides. Played by Igor Strawinsky (Piano) and Orchestre des Concerts Straram conducted by Ernest Ansermet. Three 12-inch discs (C-LFX81 to C-LFX83). \$2 each.

timbre scheme. The piano acquits itself rather monotonously, being treated for the most part in a dry contrapuntal manner and frequently posing as a percussion instrument. In this last capacity the phonograph, which always tends to banjo-ify the piano, certainly heightens the effect. There are three movements, each taking two record-sides. The first movement, *Presto*, opens with a vigorous outburst that forms the backbone of the whole movement, and it is contrasted with music of a happy inconsequential nature in which the flutes play a large part. They absolutely whistle, apparently as unconsciously and charmingly as I do when I'm waiting for something to happen, or as you do when bustling to the office of a morning. At other times the wood-winds suggest one of these old-fashioned one-legged street organs—but I am quite sure Strawinsky would censor this comparison.

Bach's ghost stalks the staves of the *Andante rapsodico*, and it is not at all certain that Liszt would have understood the appendage of "rapsodico" to the *andante*. The chief tune in this movement is not only melodically suggestive of Bach, but it is scored as Bach scored much of his B minor Mass—that is, with a preponderance of oboes and bassoons which wheeze along complacently. Throughout most of Strawinsky's later works one enjoys a complete rebuttal of the Haydn "family system" of grouping instruments. In Strawinsky's orchestra each instrument is an individual, and chords are made up of all sorts of contrasting instruments; a gathering of different colors to make a startling effect rather than an assembling of relatives to produce a family portrait.

The final movement, *Allegro capriccioso*, is reached without break after a piano cadenza that strikes one as being singularly out of place in the general scheme. This last movement is a fairly successful attempt at being classically Viennese—if such a thing is possible. It is fussy and at times almost bombastic, until the flutes resume their charming whistling to the accompaniment of dancey piano figures. Much of this finale is exalted cafe music and, towards the end, strongly resembles some exceedingly clever music in the current film "Monte Carlo," or perhaps the "Monte Carlo" music resembles the Strawinsky. The film passage in question was the accompaniment of a song sung from the window of an actual train in motion, the music graphically illustrating the chuffing of the locomotive. I preferred the movie music to this particular bit of Strawinsky, which is often rather trite not to say cheap.

The recording throughout is clear and alive with Strawinsky himself doing the piano part and Ansermet conducting capable instrumentalists, and this set should find its way into any comprehensive collection. Folk having *Il Trovatore* complexes and even those who live by Wagner and Tschaikowsky will not care for this clever *Capriccio*; Bach maniacs will probably be annoyed; but those with open minds and ears will get plenty of amusement out of this work, which will stand many hearings. The word which best describes one's reaction to the neoclassic works of Strawinsky is "fascination"; one is not overpowered or imaginatively stirred as one was by the essentially Russian works of his earlier days. It was precisely the Russianism of *Fire Bird* and *Petroushka* that led one to expect that in the hands of Strawinsky the dilettantism of Russian Nationalist music would be supplanted by something more solid and permanent, but there has been something in the nature of a geological fault, and Strawinsky now finds himself in a totally different and foreign stratum. Bach wrote a "Capriccio for the Departure of a Beloved Brother" and one might caption the present fascinating work of Strawinsky, "Capriccio for the Departure of a Beloved Russian."

New York Letter

NEW YORK, December, 1930.

My plea in these columns, several months back, for Bach recordings by that splendid organist, Lynnwood Farnam, has been in vain. Lynnwood Farnam died, at the very height of his career, November 23, 1930. This widely known church and concert organist's passing is a blow to music in America; an unregainable loss for music lovers who have heard him play and who have come to cherish his offerings, a loss to the art of organ playing that cannot be estimated. Besides being a great interpreter, Lynnwood Farnam was justly celebrated for his teaching both at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and in his own studios. I am more than tempted to quote from Lawrence Gilman's eulogy (printed in the *New York Herald-Tribune* of November 26), many readers of *Disques* may have missed it: "Lynnwood Farnam was buried yesterday. The realization of that fact is peculiarly saddening to those who know how rare are the musical artists of his type: those who, self-effacing and devoted, combine with their humility and their priestly attitude toward the art they serve, the communicative power of the finely touched and greatly qualified interpreter . . . One of the greatest organists of his time, he was virtuoso without the virtuoso's usual curse of egoism; a great technician without the great technician's frequent passion for display. He was a master, but he used his mastery only in the service of what seemed to him the noblest things in music."

The Metropolitan has given us its version of Moussorgsky's *The Fair at Sorochintzy*. Recording sessions, in the near future, at the Victor studios, will no doubt render available selections from this indisputably minor opera of the great Russian. The ballet forces at the Met are now, so it is rumored, incorporating *A Night on Bald Mountain* in the score! At any rate, recordings from this novelty will be delightfully acceptable after the long run of the usual Italian operatic publications.

Pianists of every conceivable school, age, and period kept keyboard admirers jumping during the past few weeks. With no insistence to chronological order I name the following, some recording and some wanting to record: Paderewski, Giesecking, Copeland, Smeterlin, Bauer, Levitski, Brailowsky, Deering, and Iturbi. Paderewski recitals began to take on the aspect of an historical event a long while ago; Giesecking followed up his former solo and Debussy (with Garden) triumphs with an equally turbulent reception at a last recital in America this season, December 9; Copeland continues to attract discriminating and intelligent audiences and, as is usual with him, makes fascinating programs of ancients (Corelli, Gravioli), Bach, Ravel, Debussy and contemporary Spanish music. It is a pity that this last named virtuoso has not recorded. I have it authoritatively that he would welcome the opportunity. Copeland also appeared with the Philadelphia Orchestra, under Stokowski, in performances of Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* and *Deux Dances* by Debussy. His interpretations of both works easily bettered the existing gramophonic editions. Smeterlin is a Polish pianist, new to our shores. He is a mature artist, a brilliant interpreter of Chopin and possesses an extremely able technique. Smeterlin makes Polydor records. Harold Bauer was extremely disappointing. However, I do not feel that he was at his best. Numbers by Bach, played first, were sublimely rendered; but the subsequent Chopin (*Sonata*, Op. 58), Schumann, and Brahms pieces were hindered by a harsh tone; an unwelcome suspension accompanied most fortissimo final chords, and the effect in general was one of an entire lack of subtlety. Bauer's final number, *Ondine* by Ravel (dedicated to the present

performer), was effectively played and showed a decided superiority over the preceding interpretations.

The Boston and Cleveland Symphony Orchestras came to town, sharing for a brief space the spotlight usually pointed at Toscanini or, in his two weeks guest conductor capacity with the Philharmonic-Symphony, Stokowski. Koussevitzky gave us a commendable novelty in the form of a *Symphony in G Minor* by Albert Roussel; Sokoloff played *Horizons, Four Western Pieces for Orchestra*, by a Cleveland, Arthur Shepherd; a negligible work of no certain originality. A *Symphony in D Major* of Haydn, "With the Horn Signal" (B & H No. 31), a rarely played work, opened the Western orchestra's program. This delightful symphony should be recorded by Sokoloff and enshrined in the admirably growing Brunswick album series. After the Shepherd work came a brief, four minute piece called *Factory, Music for Machines*, Op. 19, by A. Mosoloff, a Russian. This modern composition (a well written bit of cacophony in the manner of *Pacific 231*) has a decided charm; strangely enough, probably on account of its brevity, it was liked by the majority of the audience. It would fill a single 12-inch side nicely.

Toscanini plans, among his revivals and novelties this season, the *Third Symphony with Organ* by Saint-Saëns. This work has recently been recorded by Piero Coppola and the Gramophone Symphony Orchestra with assisting artists: an organist and pianists. Stokowski, during his sojourn with the Philharmonic-Symphony, played the Sibelius *First*. Not one newspaper critic seems to know of the late Sibelius recordings; yet they all bemoan the fact that the Finnish composer's important works are not more often played.

RICHARD GILBERT.

(Continued from page 440)

Tribune before 1924) since 1922, first under the late Henry E. Krehbiel and then under Lawrence Gilman. He was born in Boston in 1897, and studied piano for six years at the New England Conservatory of Music. He was graduated from Harvard in 1918. His writing has been limited mainly to reviews and articles in connection with his newspaper work.



JOSEPH COTTLER, whose article "Three Sonatas and a Trio," appears in this issue, is co-author of the volume "Heroes of Civilization," to be published in the Spring of 1931 by Little, Brown and Company. He is collaborating with Harold Brecht, whose short stories have been included in *O'Brien's Best Short Stories* and the O. Henry Prize Collection, on a work to be published next Fall. Mr. Cottler, who is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, is at present an instructor in the Overbrook High School, Philadelphia. His chief musical distinction, he says, is that he was a member of the first jazz band to go to Italy. That was in 1921.



HERBERT BOYCE SATCHER, whose reviews of choral records, usually signed "H. B. S.," appear frequently in *Disques*, was born in South Carolina. He took Holy Orders in the Episcopal Church fourteen years ago. A member of the Commission of Music of the Diocese of Pennsylvania and a teacher of church music in the Normal School of this Diocese, he has written and lectured on the subject for a number of years. For the past six years he has been Vicar of St. Aidan's Chapel, Cheltenham, Pa.



ORCHESTRA

BEETHOVEN { Egmont: Overture. Two sides. Played by Berlin Philharmonic
B-90111 { Orchestra conducted by Julius Prüwer. One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

Miniature Score—Philharmonia No. 44.

GLUCK { Iphigenia in Aulis: Overture. Two sides. Played by Berlin
B-90110 { Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Richard Strauss.
One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

Miniature Score—Eulenburg No. 676.

The dizzy combination of a superlative orchestra, a superlative conductor, a superlative musical composition and superlative recording is encountered with tolerable frequency these days, but even so the results are seldom so thrilling and genuinely satisfying as those achieved in this hair-raising new version of the Overture to *Egmont*. Rumors regarding the excellence of this recording have been circulating for some months, and now an actual hearing of the disc not only confirms these rumors, but, in addition, proves them lacking in proper enthusiasm if anything.

Besides the tragic music of the Overture, Beethoven wrote for Goethe's *Egmont* four entr'actes, two songs for soprano, two orchestral pieces and a *Triumph Symphony*. The Overture, of course, is best known, and it is heard frequently in the concert hall. A noble and thoroughly effective piece of music, it suffers rather less than most numbers from too frequent repetition, and so hearing it again on records, especially in so superb a performance as this one, is not the dismal matter that might be expected.

Julius Prüwer has conducted the orchestral accompaniments for many Polydor operatic and vocal records, and in such work has earned a considerable reputation. One of the features of many Polydor vocal discs, indeed, has been the splendid orchestral background that he has supplied. In this disc he more than corroborates the favorable impression he made in these other records, and accordingly is entitled to a prominent place among leading recording conductors of the day. His reading here is straightforward, forthright and eminently sound, free from any fancy mannerisms. His climaxes are built up with rousing effect, yet without injury to Beethoven. The recording is powerful but well-nigh perfectly balanced, and there are no signs of distortion. Strings and woodwinds have a lovely quality of tone; clarity, too, is one of the salient virtues of the disc, so that even small details are never clouded over by incompetent playing or muddy reproduction.


Considerably less striking and exciting is Strauss' reading of Gluck's *Iphigenia in Aulis* Overture. Yet it is nonetheless a good record, well, if quietly, played and splendidly recorded, and so it deserves attention. If it sounds somewhat tame after the *Egmont*, then so do most other records. Wagner's "ideal overture," Ernest Newman says in his *Wagner As Man and Artist*, ". . . was one of the type of that to *Don Giovanni* or that to *Iphigenia in Aulis*—i. e., one that either made no use at all of thematic material from the opera itself, or the minimum use of it, the dramatic conflict of the stage action being fought out ideally, as it were, in the overture, in the persons of two symbolic musical themes."

SCHMITT**C-LFX68**

to

C-LFX71

IMPORTED



The Tragedy of Salomé. Eight sides. Played by Orchestre des Concerts Straram conducted by Florent Schmitt.
Four 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

Miniature Score—Durand et Cie.

DEBUSSY**V-9825**

to

V-9827

La Mer. Six sides. Played by Symphony Orchestra conducted by Piero Coppola.
Three 12-inch discs in album. Victor Set M-89. \$5.

Miniature Score—Durand et Cie.

In a review of the Coppola recording of this ballet music (see *Disques* for July, 1930, page 167), I gave a free translation of the Robert d'Humières poem upon which the musical dance drama is built. It will be unnecessary to repeat these notes here. *La Tragédie de Salomé* may be likened to a five movement symphony; written hardly in the sonata form, nevertheless, its structure is truly symphonic. The cyclical principle, established in music by César Franck, is evident here in a manner not unlike that used by Ravel in his incomparable *Rapsodie espagnole*. A figure, or rather a veritable motto, first noticed in the *Prélude* appears now and then throughout the work. The first movement, sombre and foreboding, prepares the tragical atmosphere of the unspeakable events to follow; the *Danse des perles* is a short, glittering, scherzo-like fragment, utilizing with agreeable effect *pizzicato* flourishes in the strings. The following movement, *Les enchantments sur la mer*, is highly reminiscent of Debussy's ocean, although it is of deeper oriental colorings. Succeeding we have an exaggerated rhythmical impetuosity: two opening measures of 3½-4 time (with a phantom barline subdividing the measure to indicate the broken beat) are abruptly followed by a 4-4 measure; then the beat goes back to the original time for two more bars; a bar with a 2-4 time signature brings us to a bridge passage leading into a repetition of the original procedure. Such quick changes in tempo are seldom, if ever, encountered in music prior to 1907. Since Stravinsky we are prepared for anything. And, incidentally, there is in Schmitt's *Danse des éclairs* much that might be said to adumbrate the Russian's later *Le Sacre du Printemps*. The *Tragédie* closes with the music depicting the utter destruction of Herod's palace and all the inhabitants therein: the short section entitled *Danse de l'effroi*.

The features of this set are the really magnificent recording and interpretation. There is, one may be assured, a superb resemblance to the original sonority; the volume is good (never over-amplified, as was established by a successful playing on a Victor 1-90—the smallest orthophonic Victrola—with absolutely no blasts!); every section of this splendid Straram Symphony Orchestra (now, I believe, disbanded) comes out, on either an electrical or acoustic machine, in proper perspective and delineation. The reading is, of course, authentic; the composer brings out the salient characteristics of the work with splendid conducting virtuosity. The orchestra is always under highly efficient control. The time of the first movement is taken at a slower tempo than in Coppola's phonographic version (Coppola, naturally, is a bit concerned with putting the movement on two sides), and the exuberance attained in the final movements puts the "La Voix de son Maître" conductor's performance to shame. There will be no debate over the superiority of this Columbia registration.

La Mer was reviewed on page 10 of the March issue.

R. G.

**BEETHOVEN****C-LX43**

to

C-LX47

IMPORTED

{ Hammerklavier Sonata, Op. 106. (Arranged for orchestra by Felix Weingartner.) Ten sides. Played by Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner.
Five 12-inch discs in album. \$10.

Miniature Score—Breitkopf & Härtel No. 2664.

SIBELIUS**C-67833D**

to

C-67837D

{ Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43. Nine sides and
Karelia Suite: Intermezzo, Op. 11. One side. Both played by
Symphony Orchestra conducted by Robert Kajanus.
Five 12-inch discs in album. Columbia Set No. 149. \$7.50.

When Beethoven completed his great B flat piano sonata in 1819, he was already deep in work on his last symphony. He seems to have imparted to the sonata score some of his symphonic style of writing and construction, an idea which has attracted the attention of various musicians from von Bülow to Weingartner. The former gave it wide performance in his concert repertoire, describing the sonata as "a symphony for piano." Dr. Weingartner, nearly one hundred years after its publication, has made an arrangement for full orchestra, prefacing the score with some pertinent remarks concerning the development of his idea of transposing this solo composition into the orchestral metiér.

Beethoven composed the sonata mainly at Mödling, at a time when his deafness had become complete, a tragic fact that one remembers vividly when hearing the *Adagio* movement. The composition was first performed by Czerny in 1819, and was dedicated to the Archduke Rudolph. In its present performance, under the arranger's baton, the grandeur of Beethoven's piano music gleams through the modern orchestration in a truly inspired manner. To this hearer at least, the work takes on not only a fuller tone, but also a deeper meaning. Weingartner has departed but slightly from the Beethoven idiom, his touches of modernity being of necessity those of the scope of the modern orchestra. The first movement, *Allegro*, commences with full orchestra proclaiming the epic quality to follow, setting the rhythm upon which the movement is based. There is much of the pianistic quality here and also in the second movement, *Scherzo, assai vivace*, a brief, rollicking badinage where strings and woodwinds contrast with extreme effectiveness. The haunting loveliness of the third movement, *Adagio sostenuto*, has been described as the "transfigured expression of the anguish and gentle renunciation of the Master's last years." Here, if nowhere else, the beauty of orchestral tone fully justifies the transcription. It is one of the most eloquent movements of orchestral music. The last movement, *Largo; allegro risoluto*, gives us the strongest flavor of the Beethoven of the Nine Symphonies. Treated in fugal form, the *allegro* rushes mightily on through developing climaxes until, at the close, a brief return of the fugue prefaces the surging octaves of the coda. The recording is excellent and uncut.

The Sibelius symphony was reviewed last month in Laurence Powell's "Jean Sibelius" on page 398.

C. E. U.

PUCCINI**C-G50265D**

{ Madame Butterfly: Fantasie. Two sides. Both played by Edith
Lorand and her orchestra. One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

Good recording and competent playing are the principal features of this disc.

SAINT-SAENS {
C-G2327D

Suite Algerienne: No. 4—Marche Militaire Française. Two sides. Played by Symphony Orchestra conducted by G. Cloez. One 10-inch disc. 75c.



SINDING {
DVORAK
C-G50260D

Fruhlingsrauschen. (Sinding.) One side and Slavonic Dance, No. 1, Op. 46. (Dvorák.) One side. Both played by Symphony Orchestra conducted by Issai Dobrowen. One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

Miniature Score—(Dvorák) Philharmonia No. 178.

Those who scan the popular priced series in the hope of finding something worthwhile will not go unrewarded this month. All of these numbers are thoroughly familiar, but they are capitably played and recorded. The Saint-Saëns piece comes off brilliantly, and in it Cloez whips up his band to a fine frenzy . . . Issai Dobrowen is to conduct the San Francisco Orchestra this season. His performances here are smooth and effective.

GLUCK {
BACH
V-7321
and
V-7322

Airs de Ballet (from Iphigenia in Aulis and Armide). (Gluck-Gevaert.) Three sides and Gavotte in D (from Sonata No. 6 for Violoncello). (Bach-Leopold Damrosch.) One side. Both played by National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Walter Damrosch. Two 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

MEYERBEER {
V-EH306
IMPORTED

Die Afrikanerin: Indischer Marsch. Two sides. Played by Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Leo Blech. One 12-inch disc. \$1.75.

MEYERBEER {
HALEVY
V-EH371
IMPORTED

Robert der Teufel: Overture. (Meyerbeer.) One side and Die Judin: Introduktion. (Halévy.) One side. Both played by Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Leo Blech. One 12-inch disc. \$1.75.

MEYERBEER {
V-EH307
IMPORTED

Robert der Teufel: Marsch und Ballettmusik. Two sides. Played by Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Leo Blech. One 12-inch disc. \$1.75.

The Damrosch discs were reviewed in the December issue, when they appeared on the Victor Educational List No. 9. They are very well recorded and played. . . . Dr. Blech seems to be doing his best to bring Meyerbeer's music to the attention of the gramophone audience. Several of his Meyerbeer discs have been reviewed in these pages during the past few months, and now he issues several selections from *Robert der Teufel*. The opera was produced at the Grand Opéra, Paris, November 22, 1831; it was so enormously successful that it made the fortune of the Grand Opéra. The most impressive thing about these records is the recording, which is astonishing in its realism, its depth and its clarity. The Berlin band plays excellently, and Dr. Blech seems thoroughly at home in music of this sort. The Overture is not so interesting as the *Marsch und Ballettmusik*, which is brilliantly played here. The bass reproduces particularly well, and the whole thing comes off with vivid effect. To modern ears this music will sound crude and bombastic, but it



has undeniable dramatic power and effective contrasts. . . . *Die Judin* was first produced at the Académie de Musique, Paris, in 1835. It was in this work, incidentally, that Caruso made his last public appearance, playing the role of Eleazar. This was at the Metropolitan in 1920. The Overture is well played and recorded here.

MOZART
B-90106
and
B-90107

German Dances: Nos. 2 (K. 504), 3 (K. 600), 4 (K. 571), 4 (K. 600), 6 (K. 509), 6 (K. 571). Three sides and
Idomeneo: Overture. One side. All played by Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Kleiber.
Two 12-inch discs. \$1.50 each.

Miniature Score—(*Idomeneo*) Eulenburg No. 661.

PD-95296
IMPORTED

Titus: Overture. One side and
Figaros Hochzeit: Overture. One side. Both played by Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Jascha Horenstein.
One 12-inch disc. \$1.50

Miniature Scores—Eulenburg Nos. 660 and 603.

Kleiber's recording of the Mozart *German Dances* has been available for a year or so in the Polydor pressings, and so is well known to many collectors. The extraordinary success obtained by the set has already been described by Mr. Gilbert in his *New York Letter* for October (page 352 of the November issue). Although recorded several years ago, the reproduction compares favorably with even the latest electrical recordings, and Kleiber's skilful reading of these delightful dances, which emphasizes pleasantly their superb lilt and swing, needs no further praise. Setting forth music that is not often encountered elsewhere these days, the two records constitute an item to be prized. . . . The Overture to *Idomeneo* is a sound piece of recording and playing, too, but on the whole it is less successful than Heger's performance with the Vienna Philharmonic, reviewed on page 356 of the November *Disques*.

"'La clemenza di Tito,'" says *Grove's*, "he [Mozart] certainly was reluctant to undertake, busied as he was already with 'Die Zauberflöte,' to say nothing of the Requiem. 'La clemenza' carries us back to the old opera seria which Mozart had not touched since 'Idomeneo.' Metastasio's libretto, written in 1734, required considerable modifications to adapt it to the altered taste of the day, the most important being the introduction of the ensembles wherever the situations allowed and the curtailment of the original three acts to two. Nothing availed, however, to make the plot or the characters interesting. Throughout it was evident that the characteristics which had most attracted Metastasio's day were now only so many obstacles and hindrances to the composer." The work dates from 1791. It was written for a festive performance for the crowning of Leopold II as King of Bohemia at Prague on September 6. The Overture rendered here is one of the few numbers that have survived from the opera. The libretto, incidentally, was set to music by nineteen other composers, including Gluck and Scarlatti. The Overture is a delightful piece of music, fresh, graceful and lively, and Horenstein gives it a well managed, delicate reading. The Berlin Philharmonic has seldom sounded so well on records as it does in this *Titus* Overture. Recording and interpretation maintain a consistently high level. The same is true of the Overture to *Figaros Hochzeit*, which comes off with similar effectiveness.

CONCERTO



TSCHAIKOWSKY
V-8186
 to
V-8189

Concerto in D Major for Violin and Orchestra. Eight sides.
 Played by Mischa Elman (Violin) and London Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Barbirolli.
 Four 12-inch discs in album. Victor Set M-79. \$10.

Miniature Score—Eulenburg No. 708.

Mischa Elman's gramophone work, consisting almost entirely of negligible bits whose only virtue lies in the recording and interpretation, has not thus far been particularly exciting. For his first album set he selects the Tchaikowsky violin concerto, a pleasant enough work which, even if it isn't in good standing with those delicate souls who shrink from a frank, unabashed tune as they would shrink from some revolting disease, nonetheless contains many engaging features. The concerto was written in 1878, about the same time that Brahms, whose works were held in low esteem by Tchaikowsky, and for exceedingly peculiar reasons, was working on his own composition in the same form. The difficulties of Tchaikowsky's Concerto proved too alarming for most violinists at first, and in consequence it was seldom played. Its reception at Vienna and Hanslick's smoking criticism of it are too well known to need repeating here. Today, though, the work occupies a securely established place upon concert programs. One would have thought that the companies would long ago have given this work some of the care and attention generally lavished upon a piece that pleases the larger and more easily satisfied musical public. But it wasn't until 1929 that the first recording appeared. It was played by Bronislaw Hubermann (Columbia Set No. 131), and the set was reviewed in the March issue of *Disques*. It was a satisfactory, and in places a brilliant, recording. This new set is no less satisfactory, and perhaps it is a little more carefully done. Elman's treatment of the solo part is intelligent and well-poised, and the graceful curves and contours of Tchaikowsky's adroitly written piece are achieved with surpassing ease and charm. A lively and skilfully balanced accompaniment is supplied by the London Symphony under John Barbirolli.

BACH

C-67842D
 and
C-67843D

Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in B Flat. Four sides. Played by Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry J. Wood.
 Two 12-inch discs. \$1.50 each.

Miniature Score—Eulenburg No. 255.

These discs, extraordinarily fine ones, were reviewed in the November issue on page 363.

STRAWINSKY

C-LFX81
 to
C-LFX83

IMPORTED

Capriccio pour Piano et Orchestre. Six sides. Played by Igor Strawinsky (Piano) and Orchestre des Concerts Straram conducted by Ernest Ansermet. Three 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

Reviewed in the article "Strawinsky's Capriccio," printed elsewhere in this issue.



CHAMBER MUSIC

MOZART

C-67838D

to

C-67841D

Quintet in G Minor. (K. 516.) Eight sides. Played by Lener String Quartet with L. d'Oliviera (Viola).
Four 12-inch discs in album. Columbia Set No. 150. \$6.

Miniature Score—Eulenburg No. 13.

SCHUBERT MENDELSSOHN

V-DB1373

to

V-DB1376

IMPORTED

Quartet in G Major, Op. 161. (Schubert.) Seven sides and
Quartet in E Flat Major: Canzonetta, Op. 12. (Mendelssohn.)
One side. Both played by Flonzaley Quartet.
Four 12-inch discs in album. \$10.

Miniature Scores—Eulenburg Nos. 39 and 47.

In a world notoriously disappointing and shoddy, like, for example, this one—as any college freshman who has been carelessly exposed to Nietzsche, Schopenhauer and the daily newspapers will earnestly assure you—there are very few things which seem in no need of considerable improvements. Such incredible things, in fact, exist usually only in the somewhat lurid imaginations of the more optimistic and flighty poets. But if there are any such things, these recordings of Mozart's *Quintet in G Minor* and Schubert's *Quartet in G Major* surely have a solidly established place among them. They are not perfect, of course, but then no one expects them to be. The majority of us, indeed, used to, generally content with, and more often than not made radiantly happy by imperfect and tawdry things, probably wouldn't recognize perfection even if we were brought face to face with it.

The *Quintet in G Minor* is one of the few compositions that seem almost made especially for recording purposes. Scored for an ordinary string quartet with an additional viola, it thus calls for instruments that lose comparatively little in the infinitely delicate process of transferring the music to a record. Mozart's crisp, dainty, incomparably fresh tunes, moreover, are brief and to the point, and so lend themselves gracefully to recording purposes. The breaks between the records, in consequence, are not so annoying as usual. Written four years before the composer's death—that is, in 1787—the *Quintet* is a work of fine, invigorating strength, superb poise and sustained excellence. Vigorous and robust without being clumsy or heavy, dainty and graceful without being insipid, light and sparkling without being superficial, dealing with indubitable and age-old truisms without being platitudinous, its charm and serene eloquence are of the superlatively admirable kind that belong exclusively to Mozart. It is, in a word or so, a masterpiece of the first rank.

The additional viola adds greater solidity of tone, finer balance and a deeper richness of color. The work suggests in several ways Mozart's *Symphony in G Minor*. Its melodies have the same wistful charm, the same tantalizing twist that saves them from even the merest suggestion of banal sentimentality, and the same measured yet intensely sensitive and eloquent beauty of utterance.

The interpretation is worthy of the work. The Leners (now on a tour of the United States), aided by L. d'Oliveira, who plays, of course, the second viola part, have achieved in this set a recording that surely ranks among their very finest gramophone work. Of unfailing clarity and delicacy, the tone throughout is exquisitely balanced, and each part stands out vividly, but in proper relation to the whole. A substantial amount of the credit for the achievement belongs, naturally enough, to the recorders, who have succeeded in registering the Leners' revealing interpretation with praiseworthy accuracy.



The recordings of the Flonzaley Quartet (now disbanded, as everybody knows) make vividly obvious one of the salient advantages of the modern gramophone: *i. e.*, its unique ability to give future generations a fairly accurate and entirely plausible idea of what performers of a previous age were capable of. That this will be of almost inestimable value to musicians and of engrossing interest to music lovers is already afforded convincing testimony by the records of the Flonzaley's unparalleled playing, which for so long was widely conceded to be the finest of its kind to be heard.

Their releases in recent months have been depressingly infrequent. Here they essay, with resounding success, Schubert's *Quartet in G Major*, which apparently enjoys in this set its first recording. The work, dating from 1826, is highly individual and effective. Moreover, it is not so prolix as some of Schubert's other works, and so there is no suggestion of monotony. The results of Schubert's visit to Zselész in 1824, with its Hungarian experiences, are easily discernible in the Quartet. The Hungarian element, indeed, is clearly perceptible in every movement and adds considerably to the charm of the work. The mood of the Quartet is, on the whole, cheerful and gay, though not boisterously so, and there is a liberal sprinkling of piquant tunes that have an unmistakably Hungarian flavor.

The first movement, *Allegro molto moderato*, with its crisp *pizzicato* and haunting passages for the first violin, is expansive and melodious. Some exceedingly delicate fiddling and recording mark the second movement, *Andante un poco moto*, which has, among other things, a lovely melody for the viola and some abrupt changes of mood. The *Scherzo* begins, of course, in a spirited and genial manner. With the entrance of the Trio, though, the mood changes, and a songful melody for the 'cello, later taken up by the other instruments, is introduced. The *Scherzo* returns, and the movement ends much as it began. It reminds one, now and then, of the colorful *Scherzo* of Tschaiikowsky's *Quartet in F Major*, lately issued in a superb recording by the Budapest String Quartet, which is scheduled to visit America this season. The last movement, *Allegro assai*, is immensely attractive and vivacious; it is, in fact, perhaps the most appealing section of the work. . . . The *Canzonetta* from Mendelssohn's *Quartet in E Flat Major*, which fills the odd side of the set, is enjoyable.

The Flonzaleys give eminently satisfying, thoroughly expert and well-considered renditions. They draw a slightly richer and more varied tone than do the Leners, but so far as polish, smoothness and finish are concerned, their work is not noticeably superior. These two exemplary albums of chamber music provide the lover of such music with an abundantly rewarding hour or two of solid pleasure, and it is scarcely necessary to add, in view of the perhaps too generous array of encomiums above, that both albums are unreservedly recommended.

R. J. M.

**DEBUSSY****O-165.243**

to

O-165.245

IMPORTED

Sonate pour flûte, alto et harpe: Pastorale; Interlude; Finale. Six sides. Played by M. Moyse (flute), Mlle. Laskine (harp), and M. Ginot (viola). Three 10-inch discs. \$1.25 each.

Miniature Score—Durand et Cie, Paris.

An admirable recording, utilizing the services of one of the foremost flutists of the day, of the last but one of Debussy's immortal works. The preceding *Sonate pour violoncelle et piano* has been recently recorded by Maurice Marechal, for French Columbia, and the succeeding *Sonate pour violon et piano*, played by Thibaud and Cortot, was noticed in this department last month. All three works were published the same year. Six sonatas were intended but only three of the series were completed and published.

This music is truly French. The *Sonates* contain those peculiarities and significant qualities which have become the tradition of Gallic genius. Here is a return to Rameau, to the purity of untainted eighteenth century French art. As there was in the old master's music a fullness of charming and tender delicacy, a terse and condensed form, and a fine clarity of expression—so, in these works by Debussy, one finds the same limpid expression, well-balanced design, and fragile clarity so inherent in the purest French art before the intervention of Gluck and subsequent impregnating forces from across the Rhine.

Naturally the sonatas bring to music, through the manners of both the harmony and texture, much that is wholly new and entirely unprecedented. The *Sonate pour flûte, alto et harpe* is, in many respects, the most artistically convincing of the three. The unusual combination of instruments is handled in such a way as to suggest a highly varied texture; a texture, in the words of one appreciator, "that has the combined delicacy and strength of fine porcelain." The melodies seem born out of the very genius of the instruments. As in *La Mer* or the *Iberia* the individual instrumental writing is always cunningly interwoven; there are few, if any, repetitions or grouping of parts: each voice has its own characteristic tale to tell, never intruding upon either of its neighbors, but always making a decidedly important integral to the whole—a design conspicuous for its compactness and concealment of constructive artistry. Having created a superb string quartet which easily takes its place as a veritable gem among all works in the form, Debussy bequeathed, in his last artistic gesture, compositions which are model ones for the other major chamber music combinations. Their brevity, for they say so much, is one of their outstanding qualities. Had the entire school of German Romanticists never existed, these three works could just as well have been written.

R. G.

RAMEAU**PD-95334**

IMPORTED

Tambourin. One side and
La Timide. One side. Both played by Zilcher Trio (Hermann Zilcher, Adolf Schiering, Ernst Cahnbley).
One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

Tambourin, having been recorded several times, is already familiar to most collectors. *La Timide* is conceived in much the same spirit. Each piece makes a graceful, very agreeable record side. The performers here, the Zilcher Trio, while competent, do not play with any especial distinction. The recording is clear and powerful—perhaps a shade too powerful. But this, of course, can be remedied by the proper use of needles and adjusting of volume.

TOLDRA**V-AB591**

and

V-AB592

IMPORTED

Vistes al mar: (a) La mar estaba alegre; (b) Evocacions poétiques per a quartet de corda—La ginesta altra vegada; (c) Allá en les Llunyaries de la mar—Lagramunt. Four sides. Played by Rafael Quartet. Two 12-inch discs. \$2 each.



The sea, always, and for sufficiently obvious reasons, a favorite subject with artists of all types, is receiving its due from the gramophone these days. Only a month or so ago, indeed, Philippe Gaubert's attractive *Les Chants de la Mer* appeared on the lists, and this month we have Debussy's *La Mer* and, in addition, this quartet in A minor, entitled *Vistes al mar*, by Eduardo Toldrá. This is apparently Toldrá's first work to be recorded—at any rate, the first to reach America. Toldrá's name is not very familiar, and one searches the standard dictionaries in vain for information about him. He is a young Catalan musician, born in Barcelona (Cataluña) April 7, 1895. He now teaches the violin in the Municipal School of Barcelona. Among his works are various orchestral, choral and dramatic compositions.

Vistes al mar, based on the poetry of the Catalan author, Juan Maragall, is one of Toldrá's best liked works. The piece is in three sections. The first, depicting the sea in a joyful mood, is lively and richly colored. The second sets forth several robust tunes, deftly and attractively manipulated. The final movement, *Lagramunt*, is plaintive and sad, occasionally bordering on a quiet, inoffensive sort of sentimentality. The work as a whole is well balanced, adroitly written and contains plenty of variety. The themes are strong and attractive, and they are managed with distinction. The Rafael Quartet, which plays this charming work with taste and evident pleasure, is composed of soloists of the Madrid Philharmonic Orchestra, and is considered one of the most competent organizations of its type in Spain. The recording is excellent.

BEETHOVEN**V-DB1417**

to

V-DB1419

IMPORTED

Sonata in A Major, Op. 69. Five sides and Minuet in G. One side. Both played by Pablo Casals (Violoncello) and Otto Schulhof (Piano). Three 12-inch discs. \$2.50 each.

BEETHOVEN**SCHUBERT-****LISZT****PD-95346**

to

PD-95349

IMPORTED

Trio in D Major, Op. 70, No. 1. (Beethoven.) Played by Hirt Trio. Seven sides and Der Lindenbaum. (Schubert-Liszt.) One side. Played by Raoul von Koczalski (Piano). Four 12-inch discs. \$1.50 each.

Miniature Score—Eulenburg No. 82.

Reviewed in the article "Three Sonatas and a Trio," published elsewhere in this issue.

**DESTOUCHES
MARTINI****C-50262D**

Minuet of the Land of Love. (Destouches.) One side and Plaisir d'Amour. (Martini.) One side. Both played by Henri Casadesus Society of Ancient Instruments. One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

This was reviewed from the imported pressing on page 132 of the June issue.



MENDELSSOHN-HELD BIZET

C-2342D

Scherzo. (Mendelssohn-Held.) One side and
L'Arlesienne: Adagietto. (Bizet.) One side. Both played by
Musical Art Quartet. One 10-inch disc. 75c.

The Musical Art Quartet is a very efficient organization, and it ought to record more frequently. The recording here is everything it should be.



PIANO

DEBUSSY
V-1499

Minstrels (No. 12 from first book of *Préludes*). One side and
The Wind in the Plain (No. 3 from the first book of *Préludes*).
One side. Both played by Ignace Jan Paderewski (Piano).
One 10-inch disc. \$1.50.

DEBUSSY
RAVEL
B-90113

Feux d'artifice. (Debussy.) One side and
Jeux d'eau. (Ravel.) One side. Both played by Maria Theresa
Brazeau (Piano). One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

PROKOFIEFF
LAMARE
PD-23022
IMPORTED

Prélude in C Major. (Prokofieff.) One side and
La Passion. (P. Lamare.) One side. Both played by Michael
Zadora (Piano). One 10-inch disc. \$1.25.

Paderewski, now on a tour of the United States, recently passed his seventieth birthday. His pitifully small list of records has often been the subject for many disgruntled complaints. It is therefore to be hoped that this extraordinarily realistic recording is but the first of a series of discs from his hand. The recording, indeed, is about as fine a piece of piano reproduction as could be found these days, and the reading is distinguished for its charm, animation and strength. . . . The labelling on the review copy of the Brunswick disc has things mixed up a bit. *Feux d'artifice* is inexplicably credited to Ravel, whereas it is, of course, No. 12 of Debussy's second book of *Préludes*. . . . Ravel's dazzling *Jeux d'eau* was written in 1901. Both pieces are creditably played and recorded. . . . The Prokofieff *Prélude* is not the sort of number calculated to sooth and assuage the nerves of the excessively sensitive. A harassing piece, it proceeds at a dizzy pace. Michael Zadora plays it capitably. . . . The Lamare number is sonorous and melodious, in direct contrast to the Prokofieff, and there is some genuinely fine piano reproduction.

RAVEL**C-LF11**
IMPORTED

{ Alborada del Gracioso. Two sides. Played by Marcelle Meyer
(Piano). One 10-inch disc. \$1.50.



The publication of the five piano pieces comprising *Miroirs* dates from 1906. *Alborada del Gracioso* is No. 4 of the set, and with this recording takes a place in the gramophonic repertoire for the first time in its original form. Two recordings of Ravel's own orchestration of the piece have been available: one by Otto Klemperer and the Berlin State Opera Orchestra (PD-66464), the other by Piero Coppola and Symphony Orchestra (formerly V-W955, now domestic V-9702). Marcelle Meyer will be recalled as the performer in Stravinsky's *Ragtime* (V-W727). This young pianist is well known in European music centers as a brilliant musician, specializing, for the most part, in contemporary music. *Alborada del Gracioso* may be translated to mean "The Morning Serenade of a Merry Wit." The piece is without program; the music is more truly picture music, not program music. Scott Goddard has offered the following commentary: "He serenades with passion and conviction. The passion rises to extreme heights. He yells, he screams. The conviction dwindles. Then he changes his tactics, he becomes urgent, intense; he contrasts, with exquisite art, his passion with his desire. A pause, while the guitars are nervously thrummed, and then on the *Viñes glissandi*, hands and feet grasping, clinging, he swarms up the creepers toward the window. He tries and fails three times in as many moments. The last *glissando* takes one to the top of the key-board and leaves one there . . . he has arrived? . . ."

The work is dedicated to M. D. Calvocoressi, that splendid critic, translator, and modern music enthusiast. Mr. Goddard's *Viñes glissandi* undoubtedly refers to the marvelous agility of the fingers of Ricardo Viñes, who must certainly have first performed this musical picture of a native scene. The recording here is good, the playing deft and accomplished.

R. G.

DELIUS**C-2343D**

{ Three Preludes: Nos. 1, 2 and 3; Dance for Harpsichord. Two
sides. Played by Evelyn Howard-Jones (Piano).
One 10-inch disc. 75c.

Evelyn Howard-Jones was the pianist in Columbia's second album of Bach's *Preludes and Fugues*, released last month. Those who found his playing in that album too dry and academic can hardly find the same fault in his interpretations of these Delius pieces. They are delicate and limpid, and the pianist plays them with what seems just the proper spirit. The recording is admirable.



OPERA

SULLIVAN
V-D1844
to
V-D1852
IMPORTED

H. M. S. Pinafore or The Lass That Loved a Sailor: Comic Opera in Two Acts. (Gilbert-Sullivan.) Eighteen sides. Rendered by Henry A. Lytton, George Baker, Charles Goulding, Darrell Fancourt, Elsie Griffin, Nellie Briercliffe, and Bertha Lewis with Symphony Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent. Recorded under the direction of Rupert d'Oyly Carte. Nine 12-inch discs in album. \$18.

A too liberal splurge of superlatives is always—and generally with sound reason—viewed with considerable suspicion and doubt. It has a false, empty ring. One wonders, somewhat cynically, how anything so perfect could possibly have been achieved in a world patently so imperfect as this. A critical review loaded down with superlatives, indeed, is no critical review at all. It is, to put it politely, a dismal waste of time and space. It convinces no one—least of all its author.

Thus each new addition to the H. M. V. Gilbert and Sullivan series presents the embarrassed reviewer with a pretty problem. Few recordings offer so strong a temptation to throw restraint aside as do these Savoy operas. In the field of recorded music, they stand absolutely alone, without anything even remotely describable as competition. They represent the only serious attempt thus far made to provide collectors with albums of civilized light entertainment. The reviewers, then, having long since exhausted the available supply of suitable laudatory adjectives in celebrating the excellencies of these albums, are with each new release confronted with the unenviable task of somehow digging up superlatives even more glowing, even more convincing, even, in a word, more superlative, than those previously employed. Setting out in high spirits to describe a new Gilbert and Sullivan release, they quickly find, to their dismay, that what they said of an earlier issue would apply with equal effect to the new one—except that it wouldn't indicate with sufficient cogency the improvements, which could easily be discerned in each successive album. That, of course, is the trouble: these albums continue to improve, leaving the unhappy reviewers devoid of the proper adjectives with which to describe the improvements. Instead of starting with bad and gradually working up to good, these Savoy recordings began with good and are rapidly nearing perfect.

So that it would obviously be of little avail to discuss these new records of *H. M. S. Pinafore* at much length. *Pinafore* is perhaps the most popular of all the Gilbert and Sullivan products—at least in this country—and it isn't at all difficult to perceive why this should be so. It sounds today just as fresh, just as apposite and just as delightful as it must have sounded in 1878, when it first enchanted London. The recording in all these albums has been uncommonly fine. That in *Pinafore*, though, is about as finished, as smooth, as genuinely realistic and as perfectly balanced as modern reproduction could possibly be. There are, indeed, no weak or dubious spots—and that applies to cast, interpretation and recording. The same high level of excellence apparent in the sprightly Overture is maintained throughout the work. The cast is a familiar one and gives its usual fine performance. The orchestra, under Dr. Sargent, plays well and briskly and forms just the proper background for the singers.

GOUNOD**C-DX88**

to

C-DX103

IMPORTED

Faust: Opera in Five Acts. Thirty-two sides. Rendered by Heddie Nash, Robert Easton, Harold Williams, Robert Carr, Miriam Licette, Muriel Brunskill, Doris Vane, British Broadcasting Company's Choir and Symphony Orchestra conducted by Thomas Beecham. Sixteen 12-inch discs in album. \$32.



The principal objections that can be made to this first complete recording of *Faust* are that it is sung in English and that Chorley's silly version is used. It is hard to imagine anyone familiar with Goethe's work listening solemnly to H. F. Chorley's incompetent bungling. Even so, though, there are alleviating features. For, despite the increasing clarity of modern reproduction and despite, more specifically, the fine clarity of this particular recording, only a small proportion of the words can be clearly understood. So that, unless one is so unfortunate as to know Chorley's unhappy text by heart or follows the work with a libretto, many disturbing passages pass by painlessly, the absurdity of the words—or, more properly, the unique way they are strung together—being lost in the beauty of the music.

Outside of the above-mentioned objections—which, indeed, for those who like opera in English, won't be faults at all—this recording is a notably successful and finely achieved one. The cast is competent if not exactly inspired, the choral sections are negotiated with fine spirit and precision, the orchestra, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, plays exceedingly well—and all this is projected by the recording in a singularly clear, balanced, plausible manner.

LUALDI**C-RQ12626**

to

C-RQ12628

IMPORTED

Le Furie di Arlecchino: Intermezzo Giocoso. Six sides. Sung by Enzo de Muro Lomanto and Maria Zamboni with orchestra. Three 10-inch discs. \$1.50 each.

This attractive little opera for marionettes by Adriano Lualdi is here recorded complete, and the composer has expressed himself as being entirely satisfied with the interpretation and reproduction. Adriano Lualdi was born at Larino (Campobasso) in 1887. He studied at Rome and later at Venice under Wolf-Ferrari. His opera *Figlia di re* was successful in the McCormack competition in 1917. In addition to several operas, he has also written some orchestral works and vocal chamber music. He has contributed frequently to various musical reviews. Many of his works have been introduced by Toscanini. . . . *Le Furie di Arlecchino* has been given with great success at La Scala, Milan, San Carlo, Naples, and the Royal Theatre at Rome, as well as at many minor theatres. A delightful little travesty on the Harlequin-Columbine legend, it deals with the former's immoderate rage when Columbine receives a letter from Florindo casting aspersions upon her virtue. The scene is set in Venice. After an opening solo by Florindo—whose part, as well as that of Harlequin, is taken by Enzo de Muro Lomanto—Harlequin and Columbine take the stage, and several amusing duets follow. The piece is very brief—only three 10-inch discs are required to set it forth complete—and thoroughly entertaining. Highly expressive and richly orchestrated, the music is pleasantly modern, and it is also very tuneful. The duet *Vile e ridicolo*, delivered with incredible rapidity, is a deftly turned piece of work. The voices are very good, and they are accompanied by a large and competent orchestra. It is not mentioned on the labels, but more than likely it is the Milan Symphony, which generally figures in Columbia operatic recordings. The reproduction is excellent.

**VIVES****V-90014**

to

V-90018

Bohemios: Zarzuela. Ten sides. Sung by Tino Folgar, Rafael Diaz, Elisa de Franco, Amparo Romo and Enrique Sagi with chorus and Gramophone Symphony Orchestra. Five 12-inch discs in album. Victor Set S-4. \$6.25.

CABALLERO**V-90020**

to

V-90024

El Dúo de la Africana: Zarzuela. Ten sides. Sung by Sres. Vidal, Arnó, Cornadó, Torró, Sra. Melo and chorus with Symphony Orchestra conducted by Maestro Gelabert. Five 12-inch discs in album. Victor Set S-6. \$6.25.

One hears dispiriting complaints, now and then, to the effect that there isn't nearly enough good light music being recorded. Those who find this drought disturbing are hereby urged to investigate these fascinating recordings of two Spanish zarzuelas, taken from the Victor export list. Such investigations, in all likelihood, will be distinctly cheering and eminently rewarding. For here we have, in spirited solos, duets, trios, quartets, choruses and orchestral passages, music that is colorful, vigorous and often extremely brilliant. One of its salient qualities is that it is indubitably alive: there isn't a dull moment in either set. Each contains an abundance of rousing tunes, and nearly all of them are good and of genuine charm. How many current musical comedies, indeed, can boast of even one tune as sparkling, as well turned and as attractive as the joyous melodies with which these zarzuelas are sprinkled? Moreover, neither work reveals a disconcerting tendency to wax mostly sentimental: there is no blubbering. That everything is quite authentic and precisely as it should be is incontestably established by the fact that genuine Spanish artists perform the works. They were, in fact, recorded in Spain.

"After the bullfight the most popular form of amusement in Spain is the zarzuela, the only distinctive art-form which Spanish music has evolved," says Carl Van Vechten in his essay on Spanish music in *Music and Bad Manners*, "but there has been no progress; the form has not changed, except perhaps to degenerate, since its invention in the early sixteenth century." Defining the zarzuela, Mr. Van Vechten continues: "The zarzuela is usually a one-act piece (although sometimes it is permitted to run into two or more acts) in which the music is freely interrupted by spoken dialogue, and that in turn gives way to national dances. Very often the entire score is danced as well as sung. The subject is usually comic and often topical, although it may be serious, poetic, or even tragic." Frequently several zarzuelas are given on the same program. In the two recorded here, there is, luckily, no spoken dialogue—none, that is, beyond a few words in *El Dúo de la Africana*.

Amadeo Vives, the composer of *Bohemios*, was born in Catalonia. He succeeded Tomás Bretón as professor of composition at the Royal Conservatory of Music at Madrid. In his early days in Barcelona, "he was even reduced to peddling on the streets and to writing musical criticism," so Mr. Van Vechten says. Now Vives is ranked as one of the leading Spanish composers for the stage; he is also an admirable writer and lecturer. His early works, *Don Lucas del Cigarral* and *La Primera del Barrio*, attained some popularity, but it wasn't until the production of *Bohemios* on March 24, 1904, at the Teatro de la Zarzuela, Madrid, that Vives became really popular and so was enabled, presumably, to give up his uninspiring duties as a peddler. *Bohemios* is of the type of work known in Spain as "Sainetes." The librettists have succeeded in giving, by means of well thought-

out and carefully planned scenes, an effective picture of the troubles encountered by artists at the beginnings of their careers. The protagonists are Cosette, a soprano, and Rodolfo, a composer, who, in love with each other, attain mutual happiness at the same time that they meet success in their respective capacities at one of the Paris music halls. Since its first presentation, *Bohemios* has been given more than 15,000 times, which, it will be agreed, is more than sufficient proof of the work's popularity. The music is melodious, straightforward and effective. It is also frequently very striking, as in the *Intermedio*, where the Gramophone Symphony Orchestra contributes some highly enjoyable playing.



More immediately appealing than *Bohemios* and somewhat better produced and recorded is Manuel Fernández Caballero's *El Dúo de la Africana*. It would be hard to imagine anyone successfully resisting the charm of this zarzuela. Caballero was born in Murica in 1835 and died in 1906; he was the youngest of a modest family of eighteen. Most of his musical education was gained in Madrid. Caballero won considerable fame as a theatre and concert conductor in Spain, Portugal, Cuba and South America. He wrote nearly two hundred works for the stage, of which sixty-two were zarzuelas. Some of them, including *El Dúo de la Africana*, were composed and dictated during a period of total blindness. Caballero's zarzuelas are immensely popular in Spain, and one of them, indeed, *Gigantes y Cabezudos* (*Giants and Fat-Heads*), is said to be perhaps the most popular zarzuela ever written.

El Dúo de la Africana was first produced at the Teatro Apolo in Madrid in 1893. It was an immense success. The performance in this recorded version is exceedingly animated; it moves forward with such joyous abandon and infectious merriment that it is by no means necessary to understand Spanish in order to derive considerable pleasure from the work. The tunes fall on the ear easily and graciously, and many of them stick firmly in the memory. The orchestra is excellent, and so are the chorus, principals and recording. The latter, indeed, is about as felicitous a piece of reproduction as the present reviewer has come upon in some months.

R. J. M.

BOERO

- | | | |
|---------|---|--|
| V-47364 | { | El Matrero: Potpourri. Three sides and |
| and | | El Matrero: La Media Caña. One side. Both rendered by Vic- |
| V-47427 | | tor Salon Orchestra of Argentina and Chorus conducted by |
| | | Adolfo Carabelli. Two 10-inch discs. 75c each. |
| V-4205 | { | El Matrero: (a) No, Que No Güelva; (b) Naidas Me Vido Los |
| | | Ojos. Two sides. Sung by Nena Juarez (Contralto) with |
| | | orchestra. One 10-inch disc. \$1. |

These discs, from the current Victor export list, represent a pleasant departure from the ordinary run of operatic records. An album of selections from Felipe Boero's Argentine opera, *El Matrero*, was issued a year or so ago by Victor, and those who are familiar with this attractive music will find these additional numbers well worth investigating. They are full of piquant tunes and pleasant melodies. The salon orchestra and chorus render them briskly and with gusto. Nena Juarez, who sang in the album set, is appealing in her numbers, which have a good orchestral accompaniment. The recording in every case is remarkable.

**WAGNER****V-EH504**

IMPORTED

Die Meistersinger: Fanget An! One side and
 Rienzi: Allmächtiger Vater (Gebet des Rienzi). One side. Both
 sung by Max Lorenz (Tenor) with Berlin State Opera Orches-
 tra conducted by Clemens Schmalstich.
 One 12-inch disc. \$1.75.

Miniature Scores—Eulenburg Nos. 906 and 901.

V-EJ566

IMPORTED

Die Meistersinger: Schusterlied. One side and
 Tannhäuser: Blick ich umber. One side. Both sung by Fried-
 rich Schorr (Baritone) with London and New Symphony Or-
 chestras conducted by Albert Coates. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

Miniature Score—(Tannhäuser) Eulenburg No. 903.

V-EJ567

and

V-EJ568

IMPORTED

Die Meistersinger: Act 3, Scene 2—Grüss Gott, mein Junker.
 Three sides and
 Die Meistersinger: Act 3, Scene 4—Aha! Da streight die lene
 schon um's haus. One side. Both sung by Freidrich Schorr
 (Baritone) and Rudolf Laubenthal (Tenor) with London
 Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates.
 Two 12-inch discs. \$2 each.

V-7268

Die Walküre: Act 2—Ho-Yo-To-Ho. One side and
 Die Walküre: Act 3—Brünnhildes bitte. One side. Both sung
 by Maria Jeritza (Soprano) with orchestra.
 One 12-inch disc. \$2.

Miniature Score—Eulenburg No. 908.

Why doesn't H. M. V., which has given us so many fine Wagnerian discs, issue a reasonably complete *Meistersinger* and so have done with this far from satisfactory business of releasing every month or so one or two selections from the work? It would be a convenience to us all, and the work in complete recorded form is surely badly needed. Since, however, no such version is yet available—none, that is, except the inadequate one made at an actual performance—it is fortunate that there are plenty of excerpts, some of them of exceptionally high quality. To the *Wahn Monologue* and "footstool duet" released last month are now added the above selections. *Fanget An* is, of course, Walther's trial song from Act 1. Max Lorenz sings it acceptably, and he is ably supported by the orchestra. . . . The *Schusterlied*, which is Sachs' robust cobbling song, *Jerum! Jerum*, comes from Act 2. The parts of Walther, Eva and Beckmesser are omitted. Schorr gives this music a stirring rendition, and Coates backs him up superbly. . . . Practically the whole of Scene 2 from Act 3 is given on the two discs sung by Schorr and Laubenthal. This music, beginning shortly after the *Wahn Monologue*, which was reviewed on page 422 of the December *Disques*, deals with the conversation between Walther and Sachs, the former singing the future Prize Song—all of it, that is, but the conclusion. Schorr is magnificent in this music, but Laubenthal's voice sounds curiously strained and colorless. The reproduction, though, could hardly be bettered, and the orchestra under Coates is permitted, properly enough, to come out with satisfying force and vigor. . . . The odd

side of the set contains the music that Sachs sings as he confers Mastership upon David. This comes just before the Quintet which closes the scene. . . . In all these records, and especially in the two sung by Schorr and Laubenthal, the orchestral accompaniment is a distinct feature. Too often in Wagnerian discs the vocal parts overshadow the orchestra ridiculously, and the effect is extremely unconvincing. . . . With the exception of the Overture, which still is frequently played in concert (it has also been recorded by pretty nearly all the companies), not much of Wagner's early opera, *Rienzi*, is heard these days. Rienzi's prayer, given here, forms part of the material for the Overture. Assisted by a first-rate orchestral accompaniment, Max Lorenz gives the music a sincere, forthright interpretation. . . . Schorr's singing of Wolfram's *Blick ich umber* from Act 2 of *Tannhäuser* is immensely moving, and the record is a singularly fine one. Once more praise is due the orchestra and the recorders for giving it an appropriately prominent place. . . . The *Walküre* disc was reviewed on page 323 of the October issue.

MOZART

V-EJ497
IMPORTED

Die Entführung aus dem Serail: Act 2—Martern aller arten. Two sides. Sung by Maria Nemeth (Soprano) with Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Karl Alwin. One 12-inch disc. \$2.

PD-90149
IMPORTED

Figaros Hochzeit: Act 1—(a) Will einst das Gräflin ein Tänzchen wagen; (b) Dort vergiss leises Fleh'n. Two sides. Sung by Heinrich Rehkemper (Baritone) with orchestra conducted by Julius Prüwer. One 10-inch disc. \$1.25.

Miniature Score—Eulenburg No. 916.

B-90112

Don Giovanni: Act 2—Mi tradi quell' alma ingrata. One side and
Don Giovanni: Act 2—Aria of Donna Anna. One side. Both sung by Felicie Huni-Mihacsek (Soprano) with orchestra conducted by J. Heidenreich. One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

The *Martern aller arten* aria, given a skilful and well-poised interpretation here, is full of pleasant windings and flutterings. They do not daunt Maria Nemeth, however, and she negotiates them gracefully. One of the features of the record is the fine orchestral accompaniment supplied by the Vienna State Opera Orchestra, which plays the brief orchestral introduction beautifully. The recording reveals nothing objectionable. . . . Both of the *Figaro* numbers come from Act 1. They are rendered with spirit and charm. Heinrich Rehkemper's singing is lively and animated, and Julius Prüwer provides a first-rate orchestral accompaniment. Unlike so many conductors who, in recording work, seem to be afraid of treading on the soloists' toes, Prüwer lets his orchestra speak out with force and conviction, and the result is highly enjoyable. The recording is excellent. . . . The labelling in the *Don Giovanni* numbers is misleading. *Mi tradi quell' alma ingrata* comes from Act 2 and not, as the label indicates, Act 1. The reverse side, labelled "Aria of Donna Anna," contains Donna Anna's lines beginning with *Non mi dir*. Both pieces are delightfully rendered. The singer, Felicie, Hunt-Mihacsek, who possesses a soprano of beautiful quality, interprets both pieces satisfactorily, and she is afforded a good orchestral accompaniment.

Musical Masterpieces

Tschaikowsky's Violin Concerto. Played by Mischa Elman and the London Symphony Orchestra under the direction of John Barbirolli, on four 12-inch Victor Records in Album M-79 (Nos. 8186-8189). In automatic sequence Album AM-79 (Nos. 8190-8193). List Price, \$10.00.

This work is the only composition for violin written by Tschaikowsky in this form. It is the result of a sojourn—during the winter of 1877 and the following spring—in Italy and Switzerland, at which time he played a great deal of violin music with the violinist, Kotek. He became so interested in literature for that instrument that he put aside other compositions upon which he was working and gave his entire attention to the violin concerto. For this the musical world is the richer, for without a doubt, through its beautiful melodic content, this concerto is one which has endeared itself to all who have heard it. It was first dedicated to the late Leopold Auer, then professor of violin at the Conservatory at St. Petersburg. He considered it of such tremendous technical difficulty that for a long time it was neglected. Adolph Brodsky, another violinist, saw the music and took up the composition of his own accord, playing it in Vienna in 1881. For this reason it happens that one edition of the work is dedicated to Auer, and another to Brodsky. Auer later changed his viewpoint about the concerto . . . other violinists included it in their repertoires, until at present it ranks among the best-loved masterpieces in that form. It is especially fitting that the recordings are made by Mischa Elman, since the concerto is associated with his career. Many music lovers have heard his interpretation of it . . . it is authoritative, sincere, and eloquent. This recording will be appreciated also for the orchestral accompaniment, which of necessity, is often played as a piano arrangement. Here is the original version, directed by a conductor whose sympathetic readings have gained him well-earned praise. Altogether this splendid Masterpiece Album fills a definite want in the libraries of all lovers of representative recorded music.

La Mer, by Debussy. Played by a Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Piero Coppola, on three 12-inch Victor Records in Album M-89 (Nos. 9825-9827). In automatic sequence Album AM-89 (9828-9830). List Price, \$5.00.

Few compositions exert the appeal to the imagination which is experienced in listening to the works of Claude Achille Debussy . . . and seldom does music so vividly suggest what the titles imply. Debussy left no indication to convey his ideas regarding the music of *La Mer* other than the sub-titles . . . but these are so powerful that no description is necessary. Founder of a new school . . . master of the art which he founded . . . Debussy's genius as a composer was at its peak during the time he wrote *La Mer*. He had a great love for the ocean . . . respected it . . . felt its power . . . and in this orchestral suite he has embodied aspects and moods of a vast expanse of water that reflect his sentiments. The lover of modern music will find this album completely to his liking, for Coppola gives a masterly interpretation . . . one that never misses the vague, veiled, evanescent effects with which the orchestration creates atmosphere and gives the impressions of the sea.



Victor Division
R C A VICTOR COMPANY, Inc.
Camden, New Jersey

HANDEL

C-50261D

Ariodante: Al sen ti stringo e parto. One side and
Si, tra i ceppi. One side. Both sung by Alexander Kipnis (Bass)
with piano accompaniment by Arthur Bergh.
One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.



Ever since Columbia issued its memorable first Bayreuth Festival album, in which Alexander Kipnis' singing of the Good Friday Music from *Parsifal* was a distinct feature, releases by the Chicago Opera basso have been eagerly awaited. His fine, vigorous interpretations of these two numbers are thoroughly enjoyable. *Ariodante*, one of Handel's operas, dates from 1734. The recording on both sides is clear and smooth.

**WOLF-
FERRARI
VERDI**

V-3055

The Jewels of the Madonna: Act 2—Serenade. (Wolf-Ferrari.)
One side and
Il Trovatore: Act 2—This Passion That Inspires Me. (Verdi.)
One side. Both sung by Giuseppe De Luca (Baritone) with
Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Giulio
Setti. One 10-inch disc. \$2.

R. STRAUSS

V-9786

Salomé: Salomé and the Head of Jokanaan. Two sides. Sung
by Gota Ljungberg (Soprano) with Berlin State Opera Or-
chestra conducted by Leo Blech. One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

De Lucas' ringing voice is heard to superb advantage in the *Jewels of the Madonna* and *Trovatore* numbers. In both he is rendered skilful assistance by the Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra. The recording is smooth and clear. . . . The *Salomé* disc, having been available for some months in an imported pressing, has already been reviewed widely, and so calls for no extended comment here. It is beautifully rendered, and both Ljungberg and Blech again give convincing evidence of their high talents. The disc is one of the special Pacific Coast releases.

CHORAL



**TSCHES-
NOKOFF
GRETSCH-
ANINOFF**

C-50263D

Herr Cewahre. (Tschesnokoff.) One side and
Korsaken—Wiegenlied (Cossacks' Cradle Song). (Gretschanin-
off.) One side. Both sung by Don Cossacks Choir conducted by
Serge Jaroff. One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

DOBROWEN

C-50264D

Barynja (Gentlewoman); Auf Dem Flusse Kasanka (On the
River (Kasanka). (Arr. Dobrowen.) One side and
Reigenlied (Dance Song); Kocakenlied (Cossack Song). (Arr.
Dobrowen.) One side. Both sung by Don Cossacks Choir
conducted by Serge Jaroff.
One 12-inch disc. \$1.25.

The Don Cossacks Choir recently exhibited its peculiar talents to American audiences, arousing, according to all reports, considerable enthusiasm. It is thus

COLUMBIA MASTERWORKS*

—New Issues—

SIBELIUS SYMPHONY NO. 2, IN D MAJOR. At last!—one of the great Sibelius Symphonies, recorded for universal delectation through the enterprise of Columbia. Sibelius as tone poet and musician not only stands alone among creative artists of the northern countries but is acknowledged one of the greatest living composers. As interpreter of the beautiful folk-music idiom of Finland Sibelius has had no peers. The superb recording of this splendidly individual work was conducted by Robert Kajanus, of Helsingfors, chosen by Sibelius, and accomplished at the instance of the Finnish Government, who chose Columbia for the task.



Columbia Masterworks Set No. 149

Sibelius: Symphony No. 2, in D Major, Op. 43. By Robert Kajanus and Symphony Orchestra. In 9 parts. \$7.50 with album.

MOZART QUINTET IN G MINOR, K. 516. An authority as conservative as Grove's Dictionary says of this masterwork of genius, "The greatest (Quintet) is that in G Minor, in which a mood of spiritual anguish has by the magic of genius been crystallized into a work of immortal beauty". It is acknowledged among the musically elect to have few rivals in the world's chamber music, classic or modern. The impeccable and beguiling artistry of the Léner Quartet and their associate is to be remarked upon as ever.

Columbia Masterworks Set No. 150

Mozart: Quintet in G Minor, K. 516. By Léner String Quartet and L. D'Oliviera—Viola. In 8 parts. \$6.00 with album.



BACH BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 6, IN B FLAT, FOR STRINGS. Always a prime favorite with the ever enthusiastic devotees of the incomparable master, this splendid work represents Bach at his mighty best, ranging in style as it does from the beautiful elegy of the slow movement to the dance rhythm of the finale. The recording will well repay the many who are eager to hear it.

Columbia Records Nos. 67842-D—67843-D. \$1.50 each.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 6, in B Flat, for Strings. By Sir Henry J. Wood and his Symphony Orchestra. In 4 parts.



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Columbia "NEW PROCESS" **Records**
Viva-tonal Recording—The Records without Scratch

Columbia Phonograph Co., Inc., New York City



"Magic Notes"

altogether fitting and appropriate that Columbia should issue records by this unique organization while its triumphs are still fresh in the minds of music lovers. These are interesting records, but they are bound to disappoint those who heard the Choir's recent record of several old wedding songs and Bortnjansky's *How Glorious*. For the recording here is distinctly inferior to that in the earlier disc. The selections, however, are every bit as interesting, and range from the profound sadness of the *Cradle Song* to the vigor and liveliness of the pieces arranged by Dobrowen.



STANFORD
C-DB214
IMPORTED

Te Deum in B flat. Two sides. Sung by Choir of the Festival of English Church Music (400 voices) conducted by S. H. Nicholson. Organ accompaniment. One 10-inch disc. \$1.

BENNETT
UNKNOWN
C-DB216
IMPORTED

God Is a Spirit. (W. Sterndale Bennett.) One side and Lord for Thy Tender Mercies' Sake. (Composer unknown.) Sung by Choir of the Festival of English Church Music (400 voices) conducted by S. H. Nicholson. Unaccompanied. One 10-inch disc. \$1.

GIBBONS
KNAPP
WESLEY
C-DB215
IMPORTED

(a) Nunc Dimittis. (Orlando Gibbons.) Unaccompanied; (b) Jesus Where'er Thy People Meet. (Tune: Wareham by W. Knapp.) One side and Thou Wilt Keep Him in Perfect Peace. (S. S. Wesley.) Sung by Choir of the Festival of English Church Music (400 voices) conducted by S. H. Nicholson. Organ accompaniment. One 10-inch disc. \$1.

The School of English Church Music, of which Dr. Sydney H. Nicholson is Warden, had its inception in 1922 with the appointment of a Committee by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to report upon the place of music in the worship of the Church, and the training of the clergy and Church musicians in Liturgical music. Events moved rather rapidly as a result of the recommendations contained in this Report. Dr. Nicholson left the organ bench at Westminster Abbey to devote all his time and talents to the development of the School. After five years of preparation the School was launched three years ago, and in June of this year was able to present a splendid Festival of Church Music in the Albert Hall, London, with a great chorus of 1200 voices, representing 167 choirs from 37 English Dioceses, besides nine choirs from Wales, four from Scotland, and two from Ireland. From this choir 400 voices were chosen to record these selections sung at the Festival.

Sir Charles Stanford's *Te Deum* in B flat is probably the finest English setting of this noble old canticle. "God Is a Spirit," from Bennett's cantata "The Woman of Samaria" is a universally popular anthem, and was selected in this instance to furnish an object lesson in interpretation to choirs given to sentimentalizing.

"Lord for Thy Tender Mercies' Sake" has long been attributed to Richard Farrant (d. 1580), but Canon Fellowes ascribes it to the elder John Hilton. It is beautiful in its simplicity and is here sung with an elaborate Polyphonic Amen. Two stanzas of Cowper's hymn, "Jesus Where'er Thy People Meet," are sung to Knapp's eighteenth century tune "Wareham," one of the finest congregational tunes ever written. The Gibbons *Nunc Dimittis* is an excellent Polyphonic setting, and the Wesley anthem a very beautiful composition. The tone is somewhat coarse and the recording rough in spots.

HERBERT BOYCE SATCHER.

New Victor Records

This month the New Victor Red Seal Records present a wide range of choice. Perhaps the most interesting in the field of opera is Mme. Jeritza's recording . . . inasmuch as she has recorded selections from her latest role . . . that of Brünnhilde. Mme. Jeritza sang this role for the first time last April with the Vienna State Opera Company. A piano record of two Debussy numbers by Paderewski is significant in view of his present concert tour. And then there are other selections of exceptional interest and merit to engage your attention.

Trovatore—Per me ora fatale. (This Passion That Inspires Me) (Verdi) and

Gioielli della Madonna (Jewels of the Madonna) (Serenade) (Wolf - Ferrari). Sung by Giuseppe De Luca and the Metropolitan Opera Chorus, accompanied by the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra under the direction of Giulio Setti, on Victor Record 3055. List Price, \$2.00.

Minstrels (No. 12 from first book of Preludes) (Debussy) and

The Wind in the Plain (No. 3 from first book of Preludes) (Debussy). Played by Ignace Jan Paderewski on Victor Record 1499. List Price, \$1.50.

Airs de Ballet (Gluck-Gevaert) and

Gavotte in D (Bach) played by the National Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Dr. Walter Damrosch on Victor Records 7321 and 7322. List Price, \$2.00 each.

I Shall Return (Cross-Schipa) and

When You're in Love (Blaufuss-Donaldson). Sung by Tito Schipa with orchestral accompaniment on Victor Record 1479. List Price, \$1.50.

Walküre—Ho-ya-to-ho (Brünnhilde's Battle Cry) and

Walküre—Brünnhilde's Bitte (Brünnhilde's Appeal to Wotan) (Wagner). Sung by Mme. Maria Jeritza on Victor Record 7268. List Price, \$2.00.



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ORGAN



- DE SEVERAC** { Valse Romantique. One side and
PD-23162 { (a) Todo déguisé en Suisse de l'Eglise. (b) Mimi se déguise en
IMPORTED { Marquise. One side. Both played by Léo Stin (Organ).
 One 10-inch disc. \$1.25.

These pieces by De Severac, as played here, sound very much like the sort of music the movie organists used to provide for the news reels in the days before the cinema became articulate. They are tuneful and showy and of scant merit. Léo Stin, according to a recent Polydor supplement, is the organist Léonce de St. Martin. Here he plays on the organ of Cavallé-Coll, Paris. The reproduction is first-rate.

- FRANCK** { Prelude, Fugue and Variation. Two sides. Played by Marcel
V-D1843 { Dupré (Organ). One 12-inch disc. \$2.
IMPORTED

- BACH** { Fugue in A Minor. (Bach; arr. Best.) One side and
COCKER { Tuba Tune. (Cocker.) One side. Both played by Stanley Mar-
V-C1971 { chant (Organ). One 12-inch disc. \$1.75.
IMPORTED

- BACH** { Prelude in E Flat Minor. One side and
B-90108 { Organ Concerto in D Minor: Allegro. (Vivaldi-Bach.) One
 side. Both played by Alfred Sittard (Organ).
 One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

- HANDEL** { Concerto No. 3: Adagio. (Handel; Best.) Two sides. Played
C-2326D { by Edouard Commette (Organ). One 10-inch disc. 75c.

Franck's organ works are not very numerous. They comprise three main groups: *Six Pieces* (1862), *Three Pieces* (1878) and *Three Chorals* (1890), which were the last things he wrote. The *Prelude, Fugue and Variation*, Op. 18, is one of the works included in the *Six Pieces*. *Grove's* description of the work could hardly be bettered: "The 'Prelude, Fugue and Variation' is an early essay in the three-movement form with which Franck was to do so much later; it is, however, simpler in every way, and the variation is not a variation in the modern sense of the term, but an exact repetition of the prelude, save that the song-like theme is given a continuous semi-quaver accompaniment. The fugue is short and thoughtful, and both forms of the prelude are delightful examples of three-part writing." The recording reproduces Dupré's playing on the Queen's Hall organ very creditably, and the record is in every way a competent piece of work. . . . The Bach *Fugue in A Minor* is also well played and recorded. The *Tuba Tune*, according to *The Gramophone*, is by Norman Cocker, a sub-organist at Manchester Cathedral. . . . Reproduction and playing in the Sittard disc are both superlatively achieved. Finer organ recording, indeed, could hardly be found these days. The volume is overpowering at times, but it is so well distributed that it doesn't become objectionable. . . . Strength and power mark Commette's playing of the Handel piece, which is recorded quite as satisfactorily as the Sittard.



RELEASES FOR THE MONTH OF
JANUARY

- | | | |
|-------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 90106 | MOZART—IDOMENEO—Overture | } Recorded in Europe
PRICE \$3.00 |
| 90107 | GERMAN DANCES— | |
| | (a) Köchel Index 600, No. 3 (b) Köchel Index 571, No. 6 | |
| | (a) Köchel Index 571, No. 4 (b) Köchel Index 509, No. 6 | |
| | (a) Köchel Index 600, No. 4 (b) Köchel Index 605, No. 2 | |
| | THE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA, BERLIN
ERICH KLEIBER, Conductor | |
| 90108 | BACH—PRELUDE E FLAT MINOR—Organ Solo | } Recorded in Europe
PRICE \$1.50 |
| | VIVALDI - BACH — ORGAN - CONCERTO D MINOR
ALLEGRO [Last Part] Organ Solo | |
| | ALFRED SITTARD | |
| 90109 | BACH—HARK TO THE SOFT CHORUS OF FLUTES | } Recorded in Europe
PRICE \$1.50 |
| | Soprano Solo in German, HEDWIG VON DEBICKA | |
| | THE STATE OPERA ORCHESTRA, BERLIN
JULIUS PRÜWER, Conductor | |
| | GLUCK—O DEL MIO DOLCE ARDOR—Soprano Solo in Italian
HEDWIG VON DEBICKA Piano by JULIUS PRÜWER | |
| 90110 | GLUCK—IPHIGENIA IN AULIS . . . Overture, Parts I and II | } Recorded in Europe
PRICE \$1.50 |
| | THE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA, BERLIN
RICHARD STRAUSS, Conductor | |
| 90111 | BEETHOVEN—EGMONT Overture, Parts I and II | } Recorded in Europe
PRICE \$1.50 |
| | THE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA, BERLIN
JULIUS PRÜWER, Conductor | |
| 90112 | MOZART—DON GIOVANNI — ARIA OF DONNA ANNA | } Recorded in Europe
PRICE \$1.50 |
| | ARIA OF DONNA ELVIRA Soprano Solos in German
FELICIE HÜNI-MIHACSEK | |
| 90113 | RAVEL—JEUX d'EAU (The Fountain) and DEBUSSY—Feu | } Recorded in Europe
PRICE \$1.50 |
| | d' Artifice (Fireworks)—MARIA THERESA BRAZEAU—Piano Solos | |

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VOCAL



BRAHMS

PD-23148
IMPORTED

Die Botschaft (Wehe Lüftchen, lind und lieblich, Op. 47, No. 1).
One side and

Nicht mehr zu dir zu gehen, Op. 32, No. 7. One side. Both
sung by Heinrich Rehkemper (Baritone) with piano accompani-
ment by Michael Rauchelsen. One 10-inch disc. \$1.25.

GRIEG

PD-23150
IMPORTED

Im Kahne. One side and

Zur Johannisnacht, Op. 60, No. 5. One side. Both sung by
Heinrich Rehkemper (Baritone) with piano accompaniment by
Michael Rauchelsen. One 10-inch disc. \$1.25.

These are distinguished vocal records, well, tastefully and intelligently sung, beautifully accompanied and excellently recorded. Heinrich Rehkemper, a member of the National Theatre at Munich, will be remembered as the soloist in Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*. The possessor of a voice of great natural charm and beauty, he employs it with unfailing skill and artistry. Brahms' *Die Botschaft* is one of the five songs that comprise Op. 47. Composed sometime between 1864 and 1868, they were published the latter year. *Nicht mehr zu dir zu gehen* is the second of the nine songs that comprise Op. 32. These pieces were published in 1864, but their composition dates to 1863 and earlier. The Grieg *Im Kahne* is immensely charming and effective, and in it Rehkemper and the recorders combine in producing an almost flawless piece of recording and interpretation. *Zu Johannisnacht* is an attractive song, too. Praise is due Michael Rauchelsen, who provides in every instance a well considered background for Rehkemper.

FRANCK

PD-566044
IMPORTED

Eighth Beatitude: Mater Dolorosa. One side and

Nocturne: O Fraiche Nuit. One side. Both sung by Germaine
Martinelli (Soprano) with orchestra conducted by Albert Wolff.
One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

In the epic of the *Beautitudes*, Vincent d'Indy says, " 'Father' Franck recounts, almost with naïveté, the beneficent action upon human destiny of a God Who is all love. In this musical poem all the conditions needful in classic ages for the constitution of an epic are fulfilled: unity, sublimity, plentitude and interest of subject, the fitness of the poet and the environment, the former creating a work in faith in an age undermined by unbelief, himself firmly convinced of all that he relates, and dominating even sceptics by his musical eloquence, vaguer, but more universally captivating than a versified poem." The *Eighth Beatitude*, perhaps the crown of the work, sums up all the others. Mme. Martinelli sings the selection here earnestly and sincerely; her voice is not naturally a particularly lovely one, nor is it very flexible, but she sings with a taste, dignity and intelligence that are infinitely preferable to a beautiful voice injudiciously employed. The orchestral accompaniment, under Albert Wolff's reliable direction, is well played. The *Nocturne*, composed in 1884, the same year which produced the *Prelude, Choral and Fugue* for piano, is rendered with similar skill and persuasiveness.

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I Have Twelve Oxen. (Ireland.) One side and
(a) Spring Sorrow. (Ireland.) (b) Trottin' To the Fair. (Stanford.) One side. All sung by Stuart Robertson (Bass-Baritone) with piano accompaniment. One 10-inch disc. \$1.25.



Excellently sung and recorded, these modern English songs should appeal to a wide audience. John Ireland was born in England in 1879. About this time last year his *Sonata for 'Cello and Piano* appeared as an imported set, but despite the revealing recording, the moving interpretation and the attractive qualities of the music itself, the album somehow failed to command the attention it properly deserved. It is to be hoped that these songs will fare considerably better. *I Have Twelve Oxen* is a robust piece, sung vigorously by Stuart Robertson, whose clear enunciation, apparent in all three of these songs, is altogether admirable. *Spring Sorrow* is set to a poem of Rupert Brooke's. Stanford's *Trottin' to the Fair* practically describes itself.

SCHUMANN
O-4806
to
O-4809
IMPORTED

Frauenliebe und Leben: Song-Cycle. Six sides. Sung by Lotte Lehmann (Soprano) and orchestra conducted by Frederick Weissmann. Four 10-inch discs in album. \$5.

Composed in 1840 to the poem of A. V. Chamisso, Schumann's song-cycle, *Fraunliebe und Leben*, was published two years later. There are eight songs in the cycle, and all of them are given here. Often very moving and expressive, they gain enormously in effectiveness when presented complete. Lotte Lehmann's rendition is careful and sincere, and her lovely voice is admirably adapted to the music. Dr. Weissmann has a thankless task in conducting the orchestral accompaniment, but he succeeds in making it pleasantly unobtrusive, so that the result is not nearly so objectionable as might be imagined. The recording is first-rate.

**FRANCK
GRIEG**
C-2325D

Marriage of the Roses. (Franck.) One side and
Solveig's Song. (Grieg.) One side. Both sung by Andrée Marilliet (Soprano). One 10-inch disc. 75c.

**CROSS
BLAUFUSS**
V-1479

I Shall Return. (Cross-Schipa.) One side and
When You're In Love. (Blaufuss-Donaldson.) One side. Both sung by Tito Schipa (Tenor). One 10-inch disc. \$1.50.

Marriage of the Roses is included in the *Three Offertoires*, written in 1871. *Solveig's Song*, of course, is from the last act of *Peer Gynt*. Neither is of much interest, and the singing by Andrée Marilliet, a member of the Paris Opéra, is undistinguished. . . . Schipa's numbers, sung in English, are sentimental and probably intended for a wide audience. As such, they are competently produced.

**BACH
GLUCK**
B-90109

Hark to the Soft Chorus of Flutes (Bach.) One side and
O del Mio Dolce Ardor. (Gluck.) One side. Both sung by Hedwig von Debicka (Soprano) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Julius Prüwer and piano accompaniment (for Gluck) by Julius Prüwer. One 12-inch disc. \$1.50.

This ably presented disc was reviewed in the May issue on page 100.

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by Anna Case (Soprano) with piano accompaniment by Carroll
Hollister. One 10-inch disc. 75c.



These charming songs are rendered delightfully by the incomparable Anna Case, whose recordings invariably come off with fine success.

VIOLIN



BACH

V-DB1422

to

V-DB1424

IMPORTED

{ Sonata No. 4 in D Minor. Six sides. Played by Adolf Busch
(Violin). Three 12-inch discs. \$2.50 each.

V-DB1368

to

V-DB1370

IMPORTED

{ Sonata No. 5 in C Major. Six sides. Played by Yehudi Menuhin
(Violin). Three 12-inch discs. \$2.50 each.

Reviewed in the article "Three Sonatas and a Trio," printed elsewhere in this issue.

MISCELLANEOUS



**FLEGIER
DENYN**

V-B3350

IMPORTED

{ Madrigal. (Flégier.) One side and
Prelude. (Denyn.) One side. Both played by Jef Denyn (Ma-
lines Carillon). One 10-inch disc. \$1.25.

The carillon, according to *Grove's*, is a "chromatic set of bells, hung 'dead' or 'fixed' in a tower—from three to four octaves in compass—played by means of a clavier (console) arranged like the manuals and pedals of an organ, or automatically by a clockwork mechanism. Carillon is a French word derived from the mediæval Latin *quadrilionem*, a quaternary, because carillons were, in the first instance, sounded on four bells." . . . The instrument is admirably reproduced here, and the recording succeeds in giving a very good idea of what the carillon really sounds like. An attractive record, the disc is recommended to those seeking a genuine novelty.



**DE PONCE
BACH**
V-4201

Canción Mexicana. (De Ponce.) One side and
Loure. (J. S. Bach.) One side. Both played by María Luisa
Anido (Guitar). One 10-inch disc. \$1.

Amazingly realistic recording and deft playing are the salient features of this record, which comes from the current Victor export list.

BUSSER
C-D19125
IMPORTED

Cantegril. (Solo de concours de Clarinette du Conservatoire de
Paris année 1924.) Two sides. Played by A. Perier (Clarinet)
with piano accompaniment by Pierre Vibert.
One 10-inch disc. \$1.

DELMAS
C-D19126
IMPORTED

Fantaisie Italienne. (Solo de concours de Clarinette du Conserva-
toire de Paris année 1921.) Two sides. Played by A. Perier
(Clarinet) with piano accompaniment by Pierre Vibert.
One 10-inch disc. \$1.

The pieces here recorded are rather dull, but they are gracefully played by A. Perier. The second side of the *Fantaisie Italienne* is perhaps the most enjoyable part of these two records; it is lively and effective, and Pierre Vibert's piano accompaniment is excellent, as, indeed, it is throughout the four sides. Clarinetists and those interested in the instrument, of course, will find the discs invaluable.

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CORRESPONDENCE



Dr. Goldberg and Jazz

Editor, *Disques*:

Mr. Isaac Goldberg may be doing work of some value when he writes about Mencken or Havelock Ellis, but his article on "Jazzo-Analysis" which you published in your December issue doesn't seem to me to be so valuable.

Somebody should find out from Mr. Goldberg if he knows anyone else writing serious jazz except Copland and Gershwin. I have not the advantage of a personal acquaintance with either Copland or Gershwin and so maybe I'm not qualified to judge the worth of their achievements in music. In spite of this handicap, however, I have come to the conclusion that in neither Gershwin nor Copland have we the possibilities of the "Great American Composer"—(one can see traces of Van Vechten in Mr. Goldberg's unacknowledged quotation).

The Jews are doing some very good work in music today. There are Ravel, Schoenberg, Milhaud, and Gruenberg who have produced works of genuine beauty and permanent value. Up to the twentieth century no Jew had ever produced a piece of music that was worth saving over even one generation. The Jews, always a keenly appreciative race, had been proverbially sterile as creators of music. Since 1900, the situation seems to have changed: there are at least fifteen or twenty Jews writing music that is abundantly inspired, and of these there are at least four or five whose music will succeed to posterity. But that Copland or Gershwin should be among these artists seems to me very ridiculous.

For instance, what has Gershwin done to compare with *Rio Grande*? Certainly the *Rhapsody in Blue* or *An American in Paris* can't be thought of seriously either as good jazz or as good music. Certainly the *Concerto in F* and the *Preludes* aren't good jazz, although some very intelligent people think they are good music. Gershwin's whole output is not real jazz, as everyone knows,—it's a synthetic product. Jazz, figuratively speaking, is the raw material. Gershwin has not used this raw material. Instead he has taken all the dross and ash, all the worthless refuse, of nineteenth century music, and with a neo-

Strawinskyan charlatanism he has roughly daubed it over with a thin lacquer of imitation jazz—and the result seems to fool certain clever literary men like Mr. Goldberg and certain rather naïve conductors like Walter Damrosch.

Take away all the artificiality, all the superimposed veneer of imitation jazz, all the clever quips and daring devices which belong to somebody else, from the music of Gershwin and Copland, and see what you have left. Nothing. The old sterility and the typical lack of inspiration are not absent from the music of these two Jewish composers. Their music has not even the redeeming features of being sincere, or in good taste. On the contrary, it is pretentious, self-complacent, and often inexcusably vulgar.

I have been a firm believer in the value of jazz as a basis for serious music ever since I became interested in music, when I got out of high-school a couple of years ago. But the use of the essentials of jazz in writing the kind of music we are looking for is going to require a man with creative ability—the very thing Gershwin and Copland lack. Strawinsky with his *Sacre du Printemps* has lighted the path. Lambert with his *Rio Grande* has showed us the way. Now all we need is a man with inspiration and a good constructive brain, and then, and not until then, will we have the "Great American Composer" that right now everyone is secretly accusing everyone else of being.

CHARLES H. MITCHELL.

Oak Park, Ill.

From *Musical America's* Editor

Editor, *Disques*:

I find in your current issue a reference to the instrumentation of Schumann's "Carnaval," recently recorded by Landon Ronald. This instrumentation I know to have been made by the Russian composer, Glazounoff. At the time that the Diaghileff Ballet came to America, they produced "Carnaval," and the program contained the information that the orchestration was by Glazounoff.

I take this opportunity to differ greatly with your critic's review of the recently recorded Mozart G Minor Symphony. In my opinion, Richard Strauss surpasses himself here as a Mozart conductor, producing one of the finest records which it has been my pleasure to listen to in months.

A. WALTER KRAMER.

New York, N. Y.

BOOKS

Tin Pan Alley: A Chronicle of the American Popular Music Racket. By Isaac Goldberg. New York: The John Day Company. \$3.50.

Tin Pan Alley can be blamed for most of the sounds emitted by the countless loudspeakers that now harass or enchant the land. Singing, now humorously, now joyously, now lugubriously, now downright mawkishly, but always singing, Tin Pan Alley has come to occupy an inescapably prominent place in contemporary life. None of us, no matter how lofty and impeccable we profess our tastes to be, can wholly escape its influence. It is, indeed, even sneaking into the class of Big Business, as George Gershwin, in his Introduction to Dr. Goldberg's book, points out. Thus, whether or not we approve its queer antics, whether we think it amusing, annoying or just dull, whether we believe its effect upon modern taste to be salutary or evil—regardless of our opinion of the Alley, it is impossible to ignore it. It makes, if nothing else, altogether too much noise for that to be possible.

"The song of to-day," says Dr. Goldberg, "is machine-made, machine-played, machine-heard. It is a formula, as surely as is the short story of the magazine, the crime fiction, the mystery tale. It obeys every rule laid down by editors in search of speed, pep and punch. It builds up a musical literature of escape, of wish fulfillment, of vicarious sex experience, of whoopee. It is in itself a tonal aphrodisiac, providing a limited but effective vocabulary of love for a vast audience whose conceptions—and executions—of love are, if limited, effective. It is impossible to have several millions of people simultaneously listening to or singing a song—however good or bad—without that song doing something to them, and for them. It is all the more astounding, in view of this psychological fact, that the censors have so long allowed Tin Pan Alley to flourish."

Beginning with William Billings (1746-1800), who "woke up his native Boston" and "enriched the music of his country with something of the energy that thrilled in his own misshapen body," Dr. Goldberg gives an exhaustive account of the beginnings, development and present state of the Alley. All its prominent characters, as well as many minor ones, are duly trotted out and discussed in detail. The early Negro minstrels, the jaunty song writers of the Nineties, the furiously working writers of theme songs of today—

these crowd and make gay the pages of Dr. Goldberg's volume. He approaches his subject with an agreeable lack of condescension and without that futile patronizing air so often affected by people when speaking of popular music. The story of the Alley is rich in humor and pathos, and Dr. Goldberg has managed to get a good deal of it into his book.

Where did the name Tin Pan Alley come from? It was christened, according to Dr. Goldberg, early in the 1900's, in the office of one of Tin Pan Alley's salient characters, Harry von Tilzer, otherwise known as the "Man Who Launched a Thousand Hits." "It was Von Tilzer's custom, when playing the piano in his office, to achieve a queer effect by weaving strips of newspaper through the strings of his upright piano. It is not a musical effect; it is wispy, mandolin-like, and blurs the music just enough to accentuate the rhythms. Monroe H. Rosenfeld was a frequent visitor, not only as a composer and jingleman, but as a newspaper writer in quest of material. He had just finished an article upon the music business—perhaps for the *Herald*, on which he worked for a number of years—and was casting about for a title. Harry happened to sit down and strum a tune, when Rosenfeld, catching the thin, 'panny' effect, bounced up with the exclamation 'I have it.' It was another 'Eureka!'

"'There's my name!' exclaimed Rosenfeld. 'Your Kindler and Collins sounds exactly like a Tin Pan. I'll call the article Tin Pan Alley!'

"There are those who doubt Rosenfeld's invention. The pianos of the professional parlors in those days, they will assure you, sounded so unmistakably like tin pans that the metaphor must have occurred to hundreds of listeners, simultaneously. Yet, to those whose curiosity has extended to Rosenfeld's articles and verses, and to inferences as to his peculiar personality, it is easily credible that he was just the kind of man to name Tin Pan Alley."

Just as interesting as the story of the Alley are Dr. Goldberg's comments on popular music and jazz. His opinions on the subject, of course, are pretty well known to readers of *Disques* through his article *Jazzo-Analysis*, printed in the December issue. Here he discusses them at more length, and with unfailing shrewdness and charm. Dr. Goldberg's style is as vivid and lively as his subject, and considerably more witty, urbane, polished and subtle. The volume is well-indexed.

